

## Clinton set to continue assault on social gains

BY MARTIN KOPPEL

With President William Clinton's reelection virtually guaranteed, the Democratic administration is preparing to enter a second term by driving forward the bipartisan assault on the basic social gains of working people. The election campaigns of both major parties revealed that this stage is set whether the Democrats or Republicans hold the majority in Congress.

As election day approached, leaders of the National Republican Congressional Committee were encouraging their party's candidates to distance themselves from presidential candidate Robert Dole, in hopes of not losing Congress to the Democrats. Meanwhile, Clinton and his running mate,

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## Affirmative action debate heats up in California

BY JIM ALTENBERG

SAN FRANCISCO — The debate over California Proposition 209, the misnamed California Civil Rights Initiative, has heated up over the past few weeks. Proposition 209 would amend the California state constitution to prohibit state and local government bodies from continuing or instituting any affirmative action program — in education, employment, or contracting for services used by the government.

Proposition 209 states that "the state shall not discriminate against, or grant preferential treatment to, any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in the operation of public employment, public education, or public contracting." The bill's authors, Glynn Custred and Thomas Wood, assert that af-

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## Toronto Days of Action protest gov't austerity

BY JOHN STEELE

TORONTO — It was the largest political protest yet held anywhere in Canada against government cuts to the social wage, social services, and union rights.

On October 26, wave after wave of demonstrators — unionists, students, youth, and unemployed — marched in the largest of the five citywide protests held in Ontario since last December. While most participants were in organized contingents, thousands of people joined in an outpouring of opposition to the policies of the Conservative Party government of Ontario, headed by Premier Michael Harris.

Police said the crowd numbered 75,000, while organizers of the Days of Action claimed 250,000 to 300,000. Some 1,000 busloads of protesters joined in from around the province. As the march passed the Metro Convention Center, where the Conservative Party was holding a policy convention, each contingent paused to shout their anger at the Harris government, which has:

- cut \$1.5 billion from health care and plans to close up to 38 hospitals;

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October 26 march in Toronto was largest protest yet against Ontario government austerity. A day before, strikers 'cross-picketed' each others' plants in one-day action.

## Postal, phone workers strike in India

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

NEW DELHI, India — Some 1 million telecommunications and postal (P&T) workers here launched a nationwide strike over a wage dispute October 23. A week later, the walkout remained solid, having shut down most postal services, telephone line repairs, and the sending of telegrams.

Thousands of workers have staged protest rallies and set up picket lines outside hundreds of post offices and telecommunication centers in New Delhi since the walkout began. At many actions, unionists have burned effigies of Communications Minister Beni Prasad Verma, a social democrat, who declared the strike illegal. "The strike will continue until our demands are met," is a common remark at the union rallies.

The workers are demanding the government abolish a ceiling on annual productivity bonuses to P&T employees. Many workers depend on these bonuses to supplement

low wages. The government has imposed an eligibility ceiling of 3,500 rupees per month [\$1=36 rupees] for payment of such bonuses. Many of these workers average less than 4,000 rupees per month (\$110). The monthly rent for a small one-bedroom apartment here is at least 1,500 rupees.

A few weeks earlier, the cabinet had removed similar restrictions for employees on the state-owned railway, a decision big business now laments. Parity with the railroad workers has now become a rallying cry of the P&T unionists. Another 1 million state employees in the departments of income tax, audit, and accounts, and elsewhere have joined the strike raising similar demands.

"Had the Union cabinet applied its mind to what it was doing instead of routinely endorsing Mr. Paswan's proposal, the United Front government would not be facing a mess which is entirely of its own making," said an editorial in the October 25 *Times of India*, the main English-language daily published in New Delhi. The editorial was referring to the proposal by railway minister Ram Vilas Paswan to abolish the bonus ceiling for railway employees, which was approved by the cabinet. The United Front government is a 13-party coalition regime that includes Congress, one of the main bourgeois parties; Yuva Janata Dal, a centrist formation; and the Communist Party

of India (CPI).

Speaking at a press conference October 25, Communications Minister Verma lamented a "breach of trust" by union officials who had promised there would be no strike over the issue. Many of the union tops in the six labor federations that organize the striking workers are affiliated to the CPI.

"The frustration among workers is so high that leaders cannot call off the strike even if they want to," L. Balasubramani, general secretary of the Federation of National Telecom Organisations told reporters.

When Verma called on union officials to declare an end to the strike on assurances that the government would take the workers' demands under advisement, he got the support of O.P. Gupta, the 75-year-old general secretary of the National Federation of Telecom Employees and a CPI leader.

Other trade union officials, however, balked. "We ended our strike in 1993 on the basis of assurances which are yet to be fulfilled," T. P. Kodhandaraman, a top functionary of the Federation of National Postal Organisations, told the *Times of India*.

The government conceded that the strike is near total in both postal and telephone services across the country. The telecommunications ministry has sought to bring troops to act as strikebreakers. The number of troops involved is reportedly small.

## GM workers strike two plants as talks continue

BY FRANK FORRESTAL  
AND TAMI PETERSON

JANESVILLE, Wisconsin — "We're glad to see the strike. The general feeling is that it's about time," said Dan Murray, a striking member of United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 95 at the General Motors truck assembly plant here. Murray said that line speed-up and the degradation of working conditions were key reasons for the strike. The GM Janesville plant, which makes the highly profitable Chevrolet Tahoe, GMC

Yukon, and Suburban vehicles, employs 4,800 UAW members.

Autoworkers walked off the job October 29 after 44 negotiating sessions on local issues failed to produce an agreement. There was no special meeting of the local prior to the strike. Workers on the picket line reported that union officials approached them in the plant at about 5 p.m. and told them they were going out in one hour.

In Indianapolis at approximately the same

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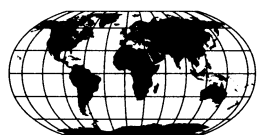
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## Tel Aviv seals West Bank, Gaza

The Israeli government sealed off the West Bank and Gaza Strip October 24, barring 2 million Palestinians from entering that country. Tel Aviv militarized the entire region around the border, claiming that Palestinians nationalists were plotting an attack. Israeli border cops shot at least two Palestinians at checkpoints.

One Palestinian was wounded after refusing to show an identity card and another injured when Israeli police opened fire on a van of workers at a checkpoint outside Tel Aviv. In Jerusalem, police were stationed at bus stops, on the roadways and in the streets, checking for Palestinians who might have crossed the border.

At the end of September, Israeli soldiers attacked thousands of Palestinian demonstrators in the occupied territories, killing at least seven, wounding over 300, and touching off three days of street battles.

## Afghan women fight exclusion

Five hundred women demonstrated at Balkh University in Mazar-e-Sharif, Afghanistan, September 23, demanding equal rights for women and men. The reactionary Taliban regime that recently overran two-thirds of that country, including the capital city of Kabul, has banned women from working. The new government has also closed schools for young women, and imposed heavy censorship on music, literature, and recreation. Mazar-e-Sharif, in the north of the country, is in an area controlled by the forces of Rashid Dostum, a rival of the Taliban.

In the Taliban-controlled areas, women are mandated to wear the burqa, a garment that covers the body from head to toe, and those caught not wearing it are beaten in public. Fazia Fallah, one of the protest organizers, said that "women in Kabul should meet and demand their freedom."

## Burma youth resist cop brutality

Burmese students blocked off a major intersection in the capital October 23, in the largest street action in several years. Some 500 students poured into the streets in a six-hour protest and sit-in, following the arrest and beating of several students involved in

a dispute with a restaurant owner. Only when the nearby Yangon University authorities agreed to take action against the police did the demonstration end.

## Abortion rights victory in Poland

The lower house of Parliament in Poland approved a bill expanding abortion rights October 24, overriding a Senate veto. The new law allows abortion in the first three months of pregnancy for personal or financial reasons.

Women still have to go through counseling and a three-day waiting period before they can have the procedure performed. Polish president Aleksandr Kwasniewski has promised to sign the law, which also provides for sex education in schools and less expensive birth control.

The previous regulations, adopted in 1993, only permitted abortion in cases of threat to a woman's life, rape, incest, or probable fetal damage. Pope John Paul II condemned the new legislation, which he characterized as "a decisive step forward toward the culture of death."

## Austrian ultraright gains votes

The ultrarightist Austrian Freedom Party, led by Jörg Haider, had a strong showing in October 13 elections for the European parliament. Taking nearly 28 percent of the vote for seats in the European parliament, the Freedom Party came in less than two points behind the governing Social Democrats. Haider's party won a similar percentage in elections to the Vienna city council the same day. Ten years ago the rightists received only 5 percent.

Haider, who cultivates an image of athletic youthfulness, has openly expressed his

admiration for veterans of the Nazi SS. His campaign combines nationalist immigrant bashing, tirades against government corruption, and opposition to the European Union.

## Colombian strike halts exports

Tens of thousands of truck drivers in Colombia, in their second week on strike, have paralyzed transport, causing exports to plummet 70 percent. The government declared the strike illegal, threatening criminal charges and imprisonment if workers don't return to work.

About 120 workers were arrested for blocking highways with trucks. The Association of Truck Drivers, representing 35,000 of the country's 120,000 truckers, called the strike to demand higher wages, lower tolls, and a several other points.

## Railroads merge, lay off workers

Union Pacific and Southern Pacific Rail Corporations are merging to make the largest railroad in the country. The combined rail giant plans to shift some operations to Nebraska and Missouri from San Francisco and Denver, cutting more than 3,400 jobs in the process. This will bring the combined workforce down to fewer than 50,000.

## Seafarers call for safe conditions

Cutting corners and downsizing have resulted in the death of more than 1,200 seafarers in the past two years, according to the International Labor Organization (ILO). In the first six months of 1996, twice as many died than in all of 1995. Today crews work on vessels 20 times as large as in 1950, but with half the crew. Meeting in Geneva October 22, an ILO conference endorsed several new standards to improve working conditions and safety for the world's 1 million seafarers.

The conference called for a normal working day of eight hours, with a 14-hour maximum, and for a workweek of no more than six days and 72 hours. This will help prevent accidents occurring from overworked, fatigued crews, the ILO said, and prevent further crew cuts.

## Workers' health needs not met

Harvard School of Public Health researchers say that nearly a third of U.S. citizens were left without health insurance or had problems getting or paying for medical care during the last year. The study found that 17 million uninsured adults and 17 million insured adults faced this problem. Seventy percent of those not insured say their symptoms were "very serious" or "somewhat serious" at the time they needed care and could not get it.

Jack A. Meyer, president of the Economic and Social Research Institute, said, "If this trend continues health coverage could be priced out of range for more and more families, especially lower-paid workers."

## Homeless man convicted of murder for trying to keep warm

Edwin Smith, a homeless man, and his companion curled up to a make-shift heating device in an abandoned building in Queens, New York, last December 31. They were burning animal fat to keep warm. When the heater tipped over onto a blanket it caught fire and set the building ablaze. Firefighter John Clancy died when he entered the burning building to look for people.

Smith, who had not intended to start a fire, was convicted of murder, arson, and criminal trespass October 22. He faces a sentence of 15 years to life in prison. The State Supreme Court, in response to the argument that the man was just trying to keep warm, said Smith "showed such recklessness that it constituted murder."

— BRIAN TAYLOR



More than 150 inmates demonstrated inside Barrientos prison in Mexico City, October 19-20. Inmates demanded the dismissal of a chief of guards and protested the lack of human rights.

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# Tensions high between Washington, Paris

BY MEGAN ARNEY

Tensions between Paris and Washington have heightened in the last few months over several points, including the French rulers' desire for a greater role in the Mideast, stepped-up moves by Washington to assert domination in Africa, and Paris's participation in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

French president Jacques Chirac toured the Mideast in late October, attempting to win back the leverage Paris used to have among the Arab regimes there. Speaking to Palestinian lawmakers October 23 in Ramallah, Chirac said his government was in a better position than Washington to break the deadlock in the negotiations between the Israeli government and the Palestinians.

The negotiations were "running short of breath because of loss of trust," Chirac said. "I see the European and French role in building more trust." He called for the Israeli government to recognize the Palestinians' right to a nation-state.

Chirac has underlined that "Europe must refuse the rule of imperial law in the region that enables the American-Israeli axis to impose just about anything it wants," commented Sami Nair, a political science professor at the University of Paris, who was quoted in *Le Monde*. The European Union, however, has ruled out any direct EU involvement in the negotiations.

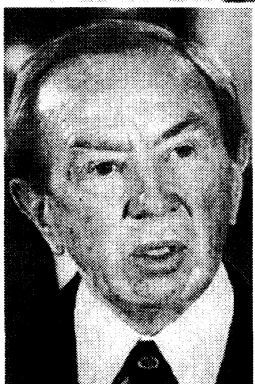
During World War I, London and Paris had secretly agreed to divide the Mideast. The British took Palestine, Jordan, and Iraq, while the French got Lebanon and Syria. In the course of World War II, anticolonial struggles gained steam in many parts of the world. The European imperialist powers emerged from the war in a weakened condition. In the Mideast, Syria and Lebanon won independence from France and U.S. capital began to play a larger role in the politics of the region.

U.S.-French relations have also been strained over U.S. policy in Iraq. Paris did not support Washington's missile strikes on Iraq in September of this year. This is a switch from its support of the U.S. assault on Iraq in the Gulf War in 1991. On October 24, Chirac appealed to the United Nations to lift a ban on limited oil sales by the Iraqi government. Two French oil companies, Elf and Total, are expected to be the main foreign conduits for the Iraqi oil.

## Washington pushes Africa 'peace' force

Relations with former French colonies in Africa are another tension point. In early October, U.S. secretary of state Warren Christopher visited several African countries, touting a plan for a regional "peace force." The U.S. scheme would provide supplies, military support, and transport to a United Nations-controlled force of as many as 10,000 soldiers drawn from African armies. This "Africa Crisis Response Force" would be used to intervene in conflicts throughout the continent. Washington proposes to put up half of the \$25-\$40 million needed and calls for its European rivals or the United Nations to come up with the rest.

Speaking in Johannesburg, South Africa, at the University of the Witwatersrand October 12, Christopher said that U.S. president William Clinton "is determined to intensify American engagement in Africa" because "it is in our interest to help Africa succeed." Christopher added that U.S. exports to sub-Saharan Africa "exceed those to the former Soviet Union" and that they will



French troops (above) in Rwanda, a former French colony, defending government that was overthrown in 1994. Tensions escalated between Washington and Paris when U.S. secretary of state Warren Christopher (inset) recently toured Africa.

increase as more African countries sell off national enterprises and carry out other "free market" reforms. Most U.S. imports from Africa have been raw material, including crude oil, gemstones, metals, and cocoa.

The government of Mali, a former French colony, agreed to the U.S.-organized force, as did those of Ethiopia and Tanzania. The Organization of African Unity responded favorably to the plan. Christopher also visited Angola and met with government officials from Kenya and Uganda.

South African president Nelson Mandela expressed some reservations. On October 11, the day before Christopher arrived, Mandela said, "Africa would like to feel they are handling things themselves... rather than acting in response to suggestions that come from the outside the continent."

On October 12 Mandela said the scheme "has potential," but would have greater credibility if organized and deployed not by the United States, but the United Nations.

Many countries in Western and Central

Africa were French colonies that Paris still considers within its "sphere of influence." Since the 1960s, French troops have intervened in Africa to prop up pro-French regimes and protect their economic interests.

Today Paris maintains a military presence in eight African countries and has military agreements for intervention in 15 others. In May, the French rulers intervened in the Central African Republic, sending 1,400 troops to crush a military rebellion over underpaid wages. In response, 10,000 marched to the French embassy yelling "Death to the French!" and then burned the French cultural center in Bangui, the capital.

In July French president Chirac announced a cut in military and economic "aid" to its former colonies in Africa. The idea, according to the *Christian Science Monitor* was to "create a flexible, lower-cost force to quickly intervene in regional conflicts." In the last 34 years, France has taken military action in Africa 35 times.

Stepping up its own presence in the region, Washington has recently probed interventions in Libya and Liberia. In 1993-94, the U.S. government sent troops into Somalia and Rwanda.

Jacques Godfrain, the French cabinet official responsible for relations with former colonies, said October 9 that Christopher's trip was politically motivated. Godfrain sarcastically declared he was "delighted to see the President [Clinton] showing interest in Africa and making it a priority three weeks before the presidential elections."

U.S. State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns called that remark "outrageous, unfounded, and unjustified." Speaking to reporters October 15, he said, "It is true that some people in Paris seem to live under the delusion that certain parts of Africa can be the preserve or domain of a certain colonial power — ex-colonial power by the way. And that is a far-fetched notion indeed."

Christopher himself stated, "The time has passed when Africa could be carved into spheres of influence, or when outside powers could view whole groups of states as their private domain." French officials rejected U.S. demands for an apology for Godfrain's remarks.

Christopher's aides said the speech he gave in South Africa was addressed as much to Americans as to African listeners, to win support for further penetration of U.S. capital in Africa. The *Washington Post* reported October 12 that the plan gives a "new definition" to U.S. intervention in Africa, in a "U.S. political climate that has no stomach for military casualties."

For some South Africans, U.S. intervention is not popular either. As Christopher spoke at the University of the Witwatersrand, students from the Wits Anti-Imperialist Coalition shouted through the open windows of the lecture hall. "Hands off Africa!" and "U.S. troops out of the Gulf!"

Meanwhile, Paris has threatened to halt its move back into NATO military structures unless a French officer is assigned to head NATO's Southern Command in Naples, Italy. Bonn has come out in support of France's desire for the Southern Command, which includes the U.S. Sixth Fleet. This position has always been under the direction of a U.S. admiral. The United States has said it will not relinquish the Southern Command, which is currently under Gen. George Joulwan.

## No clear winner in New Zealand vote

BY MICHAEL TUCKER

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — Elections in New Zealand October 12 failed to produce a clear majority for any single party to become the government.

Election night results saw the ruling National Party take 34 percent of votes, giving it 44 seats in the new 120-seat parliament. The opposition Labour Party won 28 percent of votes, for 37 seats.

New Zealand First, led by rightist politician Winston Peters, won 17 seats. Newspaper articles proclaimed Peters as "kingmaker," speculating that a government would be formed from a coalition of New Zealand First with either Labour or National. The Alliance, a coalition of five parties, took 13 seats. The right-wing party Act, which supports National, won eight seats, and United, previously in coalition with

National, gained one. The right-wing Christian Coalition achieved 4.4 percent of the vote, just short of the 5 percent threshold needed to be allocated seats in parliament.

Prime Minister James Bolger told an election night audience, "We will manage things calmly and rationally in the days ahead." Bolger's National Party remains in office as a "caretaker" government.

Winston Peters called for "cool hands, cool heads, and wise leadership."

New Zealand First leaders began formal negotiations with National on October 21, followed two days later by talks with Labour. Peters described the talks as a "bidding war" for the support of New Zealand First. Negotiations will determine whether a coalition is cobbled together, or alternatively, if Labour or National can gain enough support to rule as a minority government. Parliament is required to reconvene by December 13. An estimated 88 percent of registered voters cast a ballot. Registration is required by law.

The Labour Party, which had been languishing in the polls for much of the year, saw a big jump in electoral support in the final weeks of the campaign, as political commentators and other molders of public opinion sought to boost the party's image ahead of New Zealand First and the Alliance as the alternative government to National. This continued even after the election, with Labour being presented as the victor and its leader, Helen Clark, as the prime minister in waiting.

In reality, Labour gained its lowest share of the vote since 1928. If the election had been held under the previous electoral system, the National Party would have gained a comfortable majority on election night. These elections were held using a form of proportional representation for the first time. The drop in support for Labour was

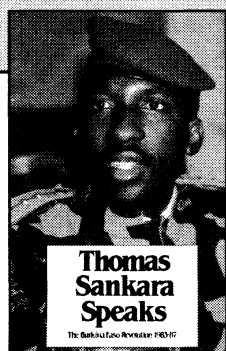
sharpest in the five Maori seats, estimated at 80 percent. All five seats were won by New Zealand First. Both Winston Peters and his party's deputy leader, Tau Henare, are Maori. Labour has held the Maori seats for more than five decades. Maori, the indigenous people of New Zealand, can register to vote either in a general electorate or in one of the separate Maori electorates.

Despite predictions by political and business commentators that the prospect of a change of government, or of an unstable coalition, would undermine business confidence and spur a withdrawal of foreign investment, the sharemarket index and overseas buying of shares and government stock continued to rise before the election and after. One week after election day, the New Zealand dollar hit an eight-year high.

Newspaper editors and other capitalist spokespeople had stressed that, provided the outcome was a government centered on National or Labour, little change in government policy was likely. "Either moderate National or moderate Labour are likely to be the lodestones of government," wrote the editors of the Christchurch daily, *The Press*, the day before the poll, "and that promises few alarming excursions away from sensible administration."

In neighboring Australia editorial writers voiced a sharper concern at the election outcome. "Indeed, there have to be doubts about the stability of any government that has an anti-immigration, anti-foreign investment populist like Mr. Peters as a major player," declared the *Australian*, while the *Sydney Morning Herald* warned of "an Italian style of politics with shifting coalitions and a turnover of prime ministers."

Michael Tucker is a member of the United Food, Beverage & General Workers Union in Auckland.



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# Garza meets with meatpackers in Iowa

BY BILL KALMAN

DES MOINES, Iowa — "Going after immigrants is a way to permanently install a second class, to get us to accept it as okay that some people will never be equal under the law," Socialist Workers vice presidential candidate Laura Garza told the *Sioux City Journal*. "That's dangerous for all workers."

Garza expressed her campaign's support for immigrant rights during her visit to Sioux City October 18. Her three-day tour of Iowa came against the backdrop of several raids by the immigration police on packinghouses here over the last several months. Garza's tour began in Perry, Iowa, where IBP operates a pork slaughter and processing plant that employs hundreds of immigrant workers.

The vice presidential candidate and two campaign supporters met with nine immigrant packinghouse workers at two housemeetings in Perry. One of those attending

was a young Mexican woman who is filing a lawsuit against the company because of physical abuse by a supervisor.

In between the house meetings the campaign team leafleted the busy plantgate where a number of workers stopped to talk.

The following day the socialist campaign team hit the road and drove almost four hours to Sioux City, Iowa. Thirty faculty and students heard Garza speak at the Little Priest Tribal College in Winnebago, Nebraska, just outside of Sioux City. All of the students at the college are Native American. The meeting was chaired by Roxanne Gould, leader in the fight for justice for Kimberly Frazier, a Santee Sioux murdered by city cops. Gould explained that most Indian reservations in the country have extremely high unemployment rates; in fact, the two poorest counties in the United States are Indian reservations in South Dakota.

Garza told the meeting, "Our party stands with fighters from oppressed nationalities to defend their rights. Native peoples have the right to self-determination, including secession if they so choose."

Garza's Iowa tour ended on Saturday in Des Moines, where she spoke to 25 people.

## Harris and Garza on the ballot in 10 states

Socialist Workers Party candidates James Harris for U.S. president and Laura Garza for vice president will be on the ballot in 10 states and the District of Columbia in the November 5 elections — Alabama, Colorado, District of Columbia, Iowa, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Utah, Vermont, Washington, and Wisconsin. (Last week's *Militant* incorrectly reported the number of states as 7.)

Undemocratic laws restrict ballot access for working-class parties, so those who wish to vote for the socialist candidates in other states must write in their names.

The list of local SWP candidates that appeared in last week's *Militant* omitted 5 Socialist Workers candidates running in eastern Pennsylvania. These are: Nancy Cole, 49, member of the International Association of Machinists, for Pennsylvania Attorney General; Peter Seidman, 50, member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees, for U.S. Congress 1st C.D.; John Staggs, 50, member of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW), for U.S. Congress, 2nd C.D.; Kathy Mickells, 46, member of the OCAW, for U.S. Congress, 7th C.D.; and Glova Scott, 41, member of the United Transportation Union, for State Representative, District 195.

## SWP wins separate ballot line

BY TONY DUTROW

PITTSBURGH — The Socialist Workers Party here won a victory for democratic rights when the American Civil Liberties Union announced October 22 that an agreement had been reached with the Allegheny County Department of Elections, entitling the party to its own line on the ballot in the 22nd legislative district.

In the original ballot placement, Edwin Fruit, the Socialist Workers candidate, was put on the same line as the Socialist Equality Party. This organization was set up by the Workers League, an antilabor outfit, for the 1996 election campaign. The election board claimed that there were only nine lines on the ballot for parties which were placed alphabetically in order, and since the Socialist Workers Party fell at the end of the listings it was not entitled to its own line.

In a meeting with the Election Board and representatives of the Socialist Workers Party, Vic Walczak, the Pittsburgh ACLU's executive director, argued that Allegheny County's failure to give the Socialist Workers Party its own row and party lever on the ballot constitutes discrimination. Since every other party was given this status,

Walczak said Allegheny County was in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment's equal protection clause, and violated the First Amendment's freedom of association guarantees. The election board reached the agreement instead of pressing for a court battle.

In response to the ballot victory, SWP candidate Fruit stated, "As a unionist working for USAir, many supported my outspoken opposition to the government cover-up of cutbacks in safety by the airlines industry. Others were with me as I opposed the dismantlement of the court-ordered busing of school children for the purpose of desegregating the Pittsburgh school system. Still more thought my active participation in the fight to jail the killer cops responsible for the murder of Jonny Gammage was yet another reason to support my party." The ruling means "all who wish to do so may vote for Edwin Fruit and the Socialist Workers Party," he added.

Tony Dutrow is a member of the United Steelworkers of America and coordinates the Western Pennsylvania Socialist Workers Campaign.



Militant/ Bill Kalman

Geraldo Sánchez (left) taking campaign to immigrant packinghouse workers in Iowa

She explained that while in Sioux City she read about a meeting of three dozen members of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 71 in Sioux Falls protesting the John Morrell packing plant's decision to terminate company health benefits for retirees. "Nothing signed in the past means anything anymore," Garza said. "Whatever we hold on to is based on the current strength of our unions." The audience included 6 students, including 4 from area high schools.

John Findley, a locomotive engineer who

works at Union Pacific in Des Moines, asked about that railroad's plans to buy part of the Mexican rail system. "The fight for Mexican workers is not simply against the privatization of that county's industries, but to fight to nationalize them under workers control," she said.

Bill Kalman is a member of United Transportation Union local 867. Gerardo Sánchez and Young Socialists member Verónica Poses also contributed to this article.

## Harris: 'break with parties of the rich'

The article below appeared on the front page of the October 26 issue of the *Salt Lake Tribune* under the headline, "U.S. Socialist Says Bring On The Revolution."

BY DAN HARRIE

Socialist Workers Party presidential nominee James Harris knows he will lose the election. But the radical meatpacking employee believes his candidacy will hasten a coming revolution.

### The Salt Lake Tribune

ten a coming revolution.

"There has to be revolutionary change," Harris said. "If people really thought they could change their conditions through voting, they would do it."

But the trend in U.S. elections during the past two decades has been to stay away from the polls. Harris said low voter turnout is not the result of apathy, but of alienation from the capitalist parties in power.

Friday, the 48-year-old Atlanta resident brought his campaign to Utah — one of about a dozen states where he is on the presidential ballot.

His bid is not about winning, but about spreading a message of socialist salvation for the working masses — a movement he insists is picking up momentum as citizens

recognize the imminent economic crisis that political leaders ignore.

"Working people need a break from the parties of the rich.... Democrats and Republicans are moving to the right, while we have found more and more interest in what we as Socialists have to say," Harris said.

There is no mistaking the Socialist Workers' platform for that of the two major political parties. Instead of balancing the budget and reforming welfare, Socialists demand universal employment, a shorter workweek, expansion of affirmative action and an end to discrimination against gays and lesbians.

Harris also advocates throwing open the U.S. borders and granting automatic citizenship to all who would come.

He denounces the current debate about curbing illegal immigration as cynical "scapegoating" by the capitalists who are really responsible for U.S. economic problems.

"No immigrant worker ever fired any worker in this country," he said. "It's just an attempt to raise the specter of somebody else being the problem."

Racism remains a severe problem in the United States, but has improved a great deal from the 1960s because it is "less acceptable to the working class," Harris said.

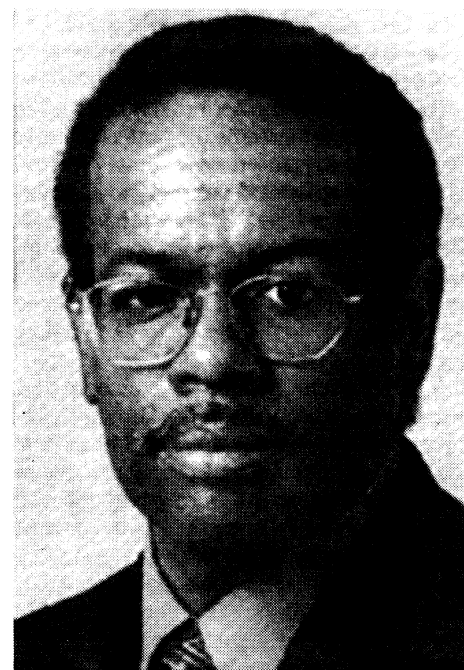
A Detroit native, Harris' first political involvement, was in the civil rights movement. He participated in a citywide school strike in which blacks established their own "Freedom Schools" to study African-American history neglected in the public system.

Later, he organized a black student union

at Cleveland State University and led protests against what he called a racist Vietnam War. Revolutionary Politics have taken him to Cuba, Nicaragua, Grenada, Zimbabwe and South Africa.

He scoffs at claims the democratization of Eastern Europe has discredited socialism.

The breakup of the former Soviet Union, Harris said, "was one of the most progressive things that has happened in decades. It was the overthrow of a Stalinist regime that was not socialist, it was counterrevolutionary."



James Harris

### Campaign for the socialist alternative!

- ☐ Sign me up as a Young Socialist for Harris and Garza. I want to campaign for the socialist alternative and against the parties of exploitation, racism, and war.
- ☐ Sign me up as a campaign supporter and keep me informed of protests, picket lines, and other political activities.
- ☐ Enclosed is a \$ \_\_\_\_\_ contribution
- ☐ I want to invite a candidate to speak at my union, school, or organization
- ☐ Enclosed is \$10 for a 12-week subscription to the *Militant*, a socialist newsweekly, or \$6 for 4 months of *Perspectiva Mundial* in Spanish.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

UNION/SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Socialist Workers 1996 Campaign, P.O. Box 2652, New York, NY 10009  
CompuServe: 104124,1405 Phone: (212) 328-1504



SELL THE BOOKS WORKERS OF THE WORLD NEED

Join the campaign to sell Pathfinder books and pamphlets

Use socialist press to build educational conferences

BY MEGAN ARNEY

The next several weeks are an opportunity to use the *Militant* subscription drive and campaign to sell Pathfinder books to build the regional socialist educational conferences being held November 29 - December 1 (see ad on front page) and to recruit to the Young Socialists. Getting subscriptions to the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, the Marxist magazine *New International* and Pathfinder books into the hands of revolutionary-minded workers and youth now will prepare them for attending the conferences.

ences, which will cap off the Young Socialists campaign to recruit 80 new members, socialist workers and youth are organizing special teams to reach workers involved in struggles, such as the Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel strikers.

Joe Swanson in Des Moines, Iowa, said supporters there are continuing to organize sales teams to reach packinghouse workers in the Midwest. Immigration cops have recently carried out a series of raids at these plants, sparking some protests. Beginning November 4, three volunteers from Newark and Chicago will be on the road for nearly a

week, visiting plant gates, working-class communities, and campuses in Iowa, South Dakota, and Nebraska. Socialist activists in Des Moines are ready to organize other teams as well. Those who want to volunteer can call (515) 277-4600.

Swanson also wrote in about sales at the packinghouse where he works. "It helps to sell the *Militant* on the job when there is information on the workplace or industry," he said. "I sold one *Militant* subscription and took a payment on a second one this week at the IBP plant in Perry, Iowa." The two workers, who are 18-19 years old, were struck by a *Militant* article on the immigration raids and protests in the area. Swanson said they were impressed that "workers would take the time to go out and interview working people and research the facts."

two days, 48 young people signed up to get more information about the Young Socialists and four expressed interest in joining.

\* \* \*

Jon Hillson in Los Angeles reports supporters of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* have found receptive audiences while campaigning for socialist candidates at events opposing the anti-affirmative action Proposition 209, which will be voted on November 5 (see article on front page).

Between sales at the University of California campuses in Los Angeles and Riverside, a debate in Pasadena, and a rally at the federal building in Los Angeles, supporters sold 12 *Militant* subscriptions, 4 *Perspectiva Mundial* subscriptions, and several copies of *New International*. At the 1,500-strong rally at the federal building, socialists sold \$80 worth of Pathfinder books and pamphlets as well. The most popular titles were about the Cuban revolution and Malcolm X. Los Angeles is one of the areas that is at the top of the subscription chart this week.

\* \* \*

Door-to-door sales in working-class communities have proven fulfilling in New York. Supporter Kathryn Crowder reports that while knocking on doors in Prospect Heights in Brooklyn, she sold a *Militant* subscription and a pamphlet of Malcolm X speeches to a high school student.

"When he answered the door he was on the phone. So while he told his friend to hold — he listened to me explain about the *Militant*, the socialist campaign and some activities of the Young Socialists," Crowder said. "The whole time he kept repeating to his friend what I was saying. 'There's a socialist at my door — and she has a paper — hold on she's got a Malcolm X pamphlet! Yeah, I'll let you read them.' And then he gave me \$20 for a *Militant* subscription and the Malcolm X pamphlet. The rest, he said, could go to the socialist campaign as a donation."

\* \* \*

Carl-Erik Isacson reported that supporters from Sweden and the United Kingdom sold 21 *New Internationals* at the Gothenburg Book Fair. Next week the *Militant* will have a more substantial report on that book fair, as well as a chart of Pathfinder books sold in October. We encourage supporters to continue to send in reports on book and subscription sales for this column.

Militant Subscription Drive MAY 11 — JUNE 16, 1996							
	Militant			PM		NI	
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold
Australia	15	7	47%	3	1	10	2
Canada							
Toronto	35	19	54%	10	2	25	11
Vancouver	30	15	50%	3	1	20	7
Montreal	25	11	44%	8	6	40	11
Canada Total	90	45	50%	21	9	85	29
France	6	1	17%	3	0	8	3
New Zealand							
*Auckland	20	9	45%	1	2	15	12
Christchurch	6	1	17%	1	1	4	2
N.Z. Total	26	10	38%	2	3	19	14
Sweden	12	5	42%	8	3	15	1
United Kingdom							
London	36	9	25%	8	1	25	12
Manchester	26	2	8%	2	0	15	3
U.K. Total	62	11	18%	10	1	40	15
United States							
*Miami	30	20	67%	20	10	22	13
Los Angeles	85	52	61%	40	30	40	17
Boston	30	17	57%	15	8	15	6
Houston	40	21	53%	15	15	15	2
*Philadelphia	35	16	46%	15	8	10	4
Seattle	45	20	44%	20	14	20	13
Peoria, IL	20	8	40%	3	1	10	2
Tucson, AZ	5	2	40%	1	0	2	0
San Francisco	70	27	39%	30	7	35	17
Salt Lake City	32	12	38%	12	3	10	0
Twin Cities, MN	60	21	35%	20	5	25	6
Newark, NJ	90	26	29%	45	28	45	6
Des Moines	25	7	28%	15	8	15	4
Washington, DC	30	8	27%	20	13	15	9
New York	100	26	26%	40	44	50	9
Atlanta	27	7	26%	12	15	12	9
Birmingham, AL	48	12	25%	5	6	18	4
Pittsburgh	30	7	23%	3	2	12	3
Detroit	50	11	22%	10	6	15	12
Cleveland	25	5	20%	8	1	15	7
Brooklyn	90	17	19%	45	42	60	19
Chicago	60	9	15%	30	16	30	8
Greensboro, NC	25	2	8%	5	7	9	2
Denver	8	0	0%	4	0	2	2
Morgantown, WV	21	0	0%	1	4	7	5
Other		2					
Total U.S.	1081	355	33%	434	293	509	179
International totals	1292	434	36%	481	310	686	243
Goal/Should be at	1200	516	43%	425	183	550	237
IN THE UNIONS							
Australia							1
AMWU-Food							
AMWU-Metal	5	2	40%	0	0	1	0
Australia Total	5	2	40%	0	0	1	0
Canada							
IAM	7	3	43%	1	0	8	0
New Zealand							
EU	4	1	25%				
MWU	5	0	0%				
UFBGWU	3	0	0%				
New Zealand Total	12	1	8%				
United States							
UNITE	15	5	33%	10	2	10	2
UFCW	4	1	25%	7	2	3	0
IAM	64	9	14%	14	3	29	5
OCAW	27	3	11%	0	1	15	0
USWA	40	4	10%	10	3	22	2
UTU	50	4	8%	5	0	28	1
UAW	0	7	0%	0	0	0	5
UMWA	4	0	0%	0	0	4	0
U.S. Total	204	26	13%	46	11	111	10
United Kingdom							
AEEU	6	0	0%	0		4	0
TGWU	5	0	0%				
U.K. Total	11	0	0%	0	0	4	0
*raised goal							

*Militant* supporters in coal-mining regions are also organizing some regional teams. Estelle DeBates in Morgantown, West Virginia, reported that supporters there and in Pittsburgh have been organizing teams that combine sales at mine portals and campuses with Pathfinder book sales at public libraries. Anyone who would like to volunteer for these teams can call (304) 296-0055 or (412) 381-9785.

The following are other reports from supporters who are responding to the openings to discuss and read the socialist press, while standing shoulder-to-shoulder with those who are fighting for social change.

\* \* \*

John Steele in Toronto reports that an international team of *Militant* supporters found wide interest in the socialist press and Pathfinder books and pamphlets by participants in the Metro Days of Action (see article on front page). Over the course of the October 22-26 actions, sales teams sold 388 single copies of the *Militant*, and 80 books and pamphlets distributed by Pathfinder.

Participants also purchased 16 introductory *Militant* subscriptions, one subscription to *Perspectiva Mundial*, 12 single copies of the Spanish-language monthly, and 12 copies of *New International*.

Participants in the sales teams came from Toronto, Vancouver, Montreal, Atlanta, Pittsburgh, Minneapolis, and Chicago. Many of them were members of the Young Socialists.

The teams also participated in picket lines to help shut down the Toronto Transit Commission and in solidarity with striking steelworkers at the S.A. Armstrong company and the Ontario Food Terminal, and in rallies at the Toronto Stock Exchange and the Ministry of Education.

Ten literature tables staffed by *Militant* supporters and Young Socialists covered the huge October 26 march and demonstration. Books and pamphlets on the Cuban revolution were among the best sellers. Many discussions took place at the tables about the growing disorder of the world capitalist system and what working people can do to defend themselves.

Signs on the tables supporting the struggle for Quebec independence provoked considerable discussion.

Socialists found that while many disagreed with this position, most were willing to engage in civil discussion and consider the communist perspective. Many of the questions and comments focused on the fight for unity between Quebecois and other workers across Canada.

Over the course of the



Militant/George Rose  
Sales were high at Toronto Days of Action October 25-26. Nearly 50 young people signed up for more information about the YS.

# 'My campaign is a tribune for workers'

BY DAVE FERGUSON

HOUSTON — "The socialist campaign is the only campaign that tells the unvarnished truth," Jerry Freiwirth said at a debate with the candidates for the 25th Congressional District. The debate was held in Baytown, a suburb of Houston dominated by the giant Exxon refinery. About 75 attended, including many students assigned by their professors. Freiwirth is the Socialist Workers candidate. "Voting for me, let alone my Democratic and Republican opponents, will not substantially alter the attacks against working people."

"The only way that working people can defend ourselves — the only way we ever won anything — is by standing up, uniting across the divisions the employer class fosters amongst us, organizing our numbers and fighting for our rights," Freiwirth said. "My campaign seeks to advance that perspective. It offers itself as a tribune of working people who are under attack, like 270 of my co-workers who have been locked out by Crown Oil since last February. Our campaign will fight side by side with those who decide to resist."

Freiwirth is a refinery worker and member of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union. Also on the socialist slate are Lea Sherman, a machinist running for U.S. Senate, and Lief Gutthuidaschmitt, a University of Houston student running for Congress in the 29th CD.

All congressional districts in the Hous-

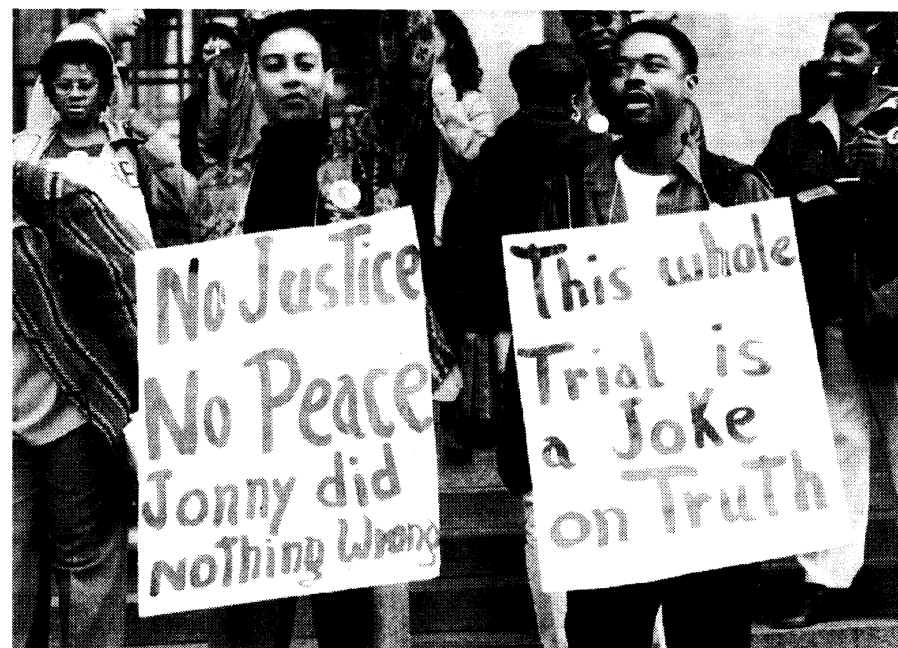
ton area were redrawn by a three-judge panel in late summer as a result of a reactionary Supreme Court decision that majority Black or Mexican-American districts in Texas and North Carolina were improperly gerrymandered. Primaries held earlier this year in Houston were invalidated and the elections were opened up to all comers. After a petitioning effort the Texas socialist campaign won a spot on the ballot for Freiwirth.

The 25th Congressional District, which includes areas where many oil workers live, drew a large pool of candidates and has attracted particular attention from both local and national media.

"Ten candidates are challenging the incumbent," a Houston *Chronicle* article stated. "The lineup is as diffuse as the district, including a judge who once served a one-month jail sentence, two physicians who own medical clinics, a socialist refinery worker, and a former Houston City Council member working in the bail bond business."

The article reported Freiwirth saying he is running for Congress as a voice for working people and family farmers "who produce all the wealth but have no say as to how the wealth is used or distributed." Also noted was the socialist's opposition to President Clinton's bombing of Iraq last August.

*Time* magazine featured the race in its October 21 issue, noting the incumbent Democrat "must win a majority of the votes



Militant/Phil Norris

**PITTSBURGH** — On October 26, 150 protesters rallied on the steps of the Pittsburgh city-county building, demanding justice for Johnny Gammage, a Black man killed by cops a year ago. On October 18, 1996, two of the three cops involved were brought to court only to have the judge declare a mistrial. The trial of the third cop is forthcoming.

next month against no fewer than 10 opponents, ranging from a refinery worker backed by the Socialist Workers Party to a district judge favored by the Christian right."

A feature of the socialist campaign has been the interest it has sparked among high school and college students. Congressional candidate Gutthuidaschmitt is a member of the Young Socialists. This organization has made the campaign one of its central focuses, organizing weekly campaign tables and three speaking engagements on the University of Houston campus this fall. As a result, two students at the university have joined the YS as well as one student at

nearby Lamar High School.

Freiwirth and Gutthuidaschmitt led a team of supporters to the Rio Grande Valley recently. They campaigned at the Fruit of the Loom plant in Harlingen, Texas, the site of an unsuccessful organizing drive by the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union. At Pan American College in Edinburg, Texas, the campaigners set up a literature table, where they passed out hundreds of pieces of campaign material and sold 10 introductory subscriptions to the *Militant* and one to *Perspectiva Mundial*. One young Chicano student decided to join the Young Socialists and two more indicated they would likely do the same.

## Two weeks left to raise \$57,000 for Pathfinder

BY BILL ESTRADA

With two weeks to go, the 1996 International Pathfinder Fund stands at \$76,722, 54 percent of the \$125,000 goal, substantially behind schedule. Supporters around the world are organizing to complete the fund by the November 10 deadline. All contributions must be received by the Pathfinder office by noon Tuesday, November 12.

Over the past few days supporters have stepped up efforts to collect pledges — in-

cluding special events and mailings. In San Francisco 40 people attended a barbecue that raised more than \$2,300 in pledges and contributions. One attraction at the event was a computer-generated audio-visual presentation that highlighted Pathfinder publications and charted the progress of the Bay Area efforts. The fund helps keep the full range of Pathfinder titles in print.

At the barbecue, Ved Dookhun, a Young Socialist who participated in "La Marcha," the march organized by Chicano youth from Sacramento to San Diego protesting attacks on affirmative action, explained the key role played by Pathfinder books and pamphlets in meeting the demand for revolutionary ideas among workers and youth as imperialism slides deeper into economic and social crisis. Dookhun sold several Pathfinder titles to others on the march.

A Newark, New Jersey, fund event featured a presentation by Olga Rodríguez, editor of *The Politics of Chicano Liberation*. Rodríguez explained the importance of the recent upsurge of the Chicano struggle as reflected by Chicano youth defending affirmative action and immigrant rights, such as the October 12 march in Washington, D.C. Ted Leonard, director of the fund in New Jersey, reported that contributions are coming in faster, but that an extra effort will be needed to collect remaining pledges on time. More than \$1,600 was collected at the event.

Pittsburgh supporters sent out a letter to everyone who has shown recent interest in Pathfinder books. Written by Lorraine Starsky, it pointed to the fund as a way to put the history and lessons of working-class struggles into the hands of today's fighters. The letter reported interest in the reprint of *Labor's Giant Step* by Art Preis. This book recounts the titanic labor battles that led to the formation of modern industrial unions in the United States, and was one of many titles sold to strikers and supporters of the McDonnell Douglas strike in St. Louis. Backers of Pathfinder also brought an assortment of books and pamphlets to participants in the United Steelworkers of America convention, which was held in Pittsburgh.

### Pathfinder Fund

CITY	GOAL	PAID	% of GOAL
San Francisco	\$10,000	\$8,600	86%
Salt Lake City	\$3,600	\$2,700	75%
Detroit	\$6,000	\$4,179	70%
Atlanta	\$2,700	\$1,850	69%
Greensboro	\$2,400	\$1,600	67%
Miami	\$2,800	\$1,730	62%
Philadelphia	\$5,000	\$2,875	58%
Boston	\$6,000	\$3,315	55%
Brooklyn	\$6,500	\$3,550	55%
Seattle*	\$9,000	\$4,810	53%
Newark	\$8,500	\$4,445	52%
Washington, DC	\$3,500	\$1,793	51%
Los Angeles	\$12,000	\$5,868	49%
Pittsburgh	\$6,000	\$2,825	47%
Cleveland	\$3,100	\$1,450	47%
Morgantown	\$1,500	\$663	44%
Chicago	\$7,500	\$3,150	42%
Peoria	\$2,750	\$1,105	40%
Birmingham	\$4,500	\$1,785	40%
Twin Cities	\$7,000	\$2,180	31%
Houston	\$3,000	\$810	27%
New York	\$8,000	\$1,473	18%
Des Moines	\$2,350	\$230	10%
U.S. TOTAL	\$123,700	\$62,986	51%
Australia	\$750	\$450	60%
Canada		\$30	
Montreal	\$465		
Vancouver	\$100		
France	\$750	\$511	68%
Greece	\$200		
Iceland			
New Zealand*	\$4,550	\$3,745	82%
Sweden	\$400		
United Kingdom			
INTERNATIONAL TOTAL	\$130,915	\$67,722	54%
SHOULD BE	\$125,000	\$100,000	80%

\*Raised goal

## Socialists in Britain protest cops' attack on sales table

BY TONY HUNT

LONDON — Metropolitan Police carried out a serious attack on democratic rights October 12, when they closed down a socialist campaign table here. The table featured a placard protesting the cold-blooded execution of Diarmuid O'Neill, an unarmed young Irish man, on September 23. The campaign table by members and supporters of the Communist League had been set up in Hammersmith — the area of west London where O'Neill was killed by police. The placard carried a picture of O'Neill with the caption "Innocent until proven Irish."

The socialist campaigners were promoting the demand for an independent public inquiry into the shooting, as well as distributing the *Militant* and Pathfinder books. The socialists have taken steps along with others to protest the cops' action.

"The actions of the police were an attack not just on our right to free speech, but on the rights of everyone to hear whatever views and opinions they want to," said Paul Davies, an engineering worker and one of those staffing the book table. As soon as the table was set up, Davies said, two uniformed and three plainclothes cops moved in along with an official from the local council, and demanded that it be removed. They claimed the table needed a trading license and was causing an obstruction.

The campaigners responded by arguing strongly for their democratic right to remain. When Davies pointed out that the real reason for the police actions was their disagreement with the views being promoted, he and the others were told to take down the table in "two seconds" or face arrest. The campaigners moved to another area of west London and sold two *Militant* subscriptions to young Irish workers.

"This blatant act of political censorship by the police should not go unanswered," said Caroline Bellamy another of those staffing the stall. "What's at stake here is the elementary right to get the facts, hear all points of view, and engage in discussion. This is especially important for workers and young people in Britain when the discussion is about Ireland."

Davies and Bellamy have sent a press release about the incident to several national newspapers and have written to the editor

of the *Irish Post*, a weekly newspaper widely read by Irish immigrants. They are also planning to contact Members of Parliament. Supporters of Fiascaill, the Irish political prisoners campaign, have decided to hold a public protest action to defend free speech on Ireland and to press the demand for a public inquiry into O'Neill's killing.

### Young Socialists Recruitment Drive

**37 new members  
in the YS**

From July 10 to October 30

City	# of new members
Athens, GA	3
Atlanta	4
Boston	1
Chicago	2
Cleveland	2
Denver	2
Houston	3
Los Angeles	3
Minneapolis, MN	2
Morgantown	1
Newark	1
New York	3
Portland	1
Salt Lake City	2
San Diego	1
San Francisco	3
Seattle	1
Washington, D.C.	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>

### CORRECTION

The headline on the article about the police killing of Jonny Gammage that appeared in the November 4 issue of the *Militant* was inaccurate. The headline, "Judge declares mistrial, Gammage's killer walks" did not convey the facts of the case. Three cops have been charged in Gammage's death. None of them have been jailed. A mistrial was declared in the case of two of the killer cops. A trial date has not been set for the third cop, nor has a date for a rescheduled trial for the other two.



# State governments start welfare cuts

BY BRIAN TAYLOR

Since Democratic president William Jefferson Clinton signed the welfare reform bill in August, state governments have begun to push through the cuts in social benefits it mandates.

The law proclaimed that as of Oct. 1, 1996, "no individual or family shall be entitled to any benefits of services" under state welfare programs with federal financing. In other words, unemployed workers are no longer guaranteed a minimal measure of public assistance as a right.

Under the old system, states would receive funding based on the number of people enrolled in the federal entitlement programs. Now state governments will get a "block grant," or fixed amount of money, independent of the number of welfare recipients, and will be responsible for proposing and running their own programs within the framework set by Washington.

This framework includes the elimination of the Aid for Families with Dependent Children program — part of the Social Security Act of 1935 — and cuts in many other programs.

Many of those who still do qualify for benefits under the new regulations will have to enter what are commonly known as "workfare" programs for substandard wages. The federal law mandates a five-year lifetime cap on welfare benefits, and state governments can set even tighter limits. Immigrants, including those with legal documentation, are especially effected by the new laws.

## 'Workfare' replaces union jobs

One of the most blatant examples of how the "workfare" programs are used against the labor movement is the recent contract between the Metropolitan Transit Authority and the Transit Workers Union in New York City.

The pact, which was narrowly approved in October, allows the MTA to eliminate 500 union jobs, cleaning the city subways and buses. This work will be done by thousands of city welfare recipients, who will receive just the amount of their benefits check.

There are already some 35,000 welfare recipients in the city's "workfare" program, doing everything from maintenance jobs to cleaning parks. This has been done with the tacit support of Stanley Hill, executive di-

rector of District Council 37, one of the largest municipal unions in the city, while public employment in the city has fallen by 20,000. "They said it would not be in lieu of union jobs.... It didn't look very threatening at the time.... It was just getting off the ground," reasoned Carl Haynes, a Teamsters local president in New York, speaking in Hill's defense.

By October 4, half of the state governments had submitted their plans of how to meet the requirements of the new welfare law.

## Clinton praises 'revolutionary' plans

The first two state plans approved by the Clinton administration were those in Michigan and Wisconsin. The president praised Wisconsin as having "one of boldest, most revolutionary welfare reform plans" in the country. That state government will require virtually every adult drawing welfare to find a job.

Those that can not find employment will be forced to work "trial" jobs set up by the state, like community service. Payment will be a welfare check.

Wisconsin authorities will also require a 60-day minimum residency in the state before one can become eligible to receive the benefits. The *New York Times* reported October 6 that the Clinton administration "said this policy appeared to conflict with a 1969 decision of the Supreme Court that held that such waiting periods were 'constitutionally impermissible' because they denied equal protection of the law to new residents and interfered with the 'freedom to travel.'"

In Michigan nearly 50,000 people will lose food stamp benefits as of Jan. 1, 1997. The Michigan scheme includes allowing the state government to reduce or cancel benefits without giving recipients a right to challenge the decision in court.

The Clinton administration has acknowledged that this breaches the constitutional right of due process, but approved the plan anyway. Adults without dependents who do not enroll in state work programs will be eligible for public assistance only three months in a three year period. Yet until now the state work programs have only admitted those who have children.

Another feature of the Michigan plan will be giving some of the federal block grant to the Salvation Army, so it can refer women



Militant/Craig Honts

Protest in Los Angeles on August 8, in Koreatown against new welfare bill

on welfare to religious families for help with child care, transportation, and other social needs.

The federal law gives states wide latitude in other aspects of the welfare programs. State governments can choose to deny benefits to those convicted of drug felonies, people who have additional children while receiving public assistance, and teenage mothers.

## Other state measures

In addition to the federal five-year benefits limit, the Massachusetts government proposed a two-year maximum in a five year period. That state also proposed: requiring parents with school-aged children to find a job within two months or lose benefits, denying benefits to anyone who has an additional child while enrolled in the program, and requiring teenage parents to finish high school to continue to receive benefits.

The actual benefits will also be reduced by 2.75 percent in the name of so-called "work incentives." Workers who take these "jobs" must give up food stamps and other aid. Instead, the state will pay a wage subsidy of \$3.50 an hour for nine months to employers who hire former welfare recipients.

The federal law says that in the fiscal year that began October 1, at least 25 percent of adults receiving welfare in each state are supposed to find work or enter "workfare" programs. But any reduction in the number of recipients will count toward the 25 percent, so states can find other ways to reduce

their welfare rolls, such as making the application procedure more difficult.

The U.S. government has also imposed restrictions on lawyers who receive federal money to represent working people. These attorneys will not be allowed to participate in class-action lawsuits for the rights of workers needing public assistance, Medicaid, or disability benefits. They are also barred from challenging or participating in litigation to alter the welfare system.

## Legal immigrants denied benefits

Some 44 percent of the projected spending cuts in the welfare law come from ending benefits for legal immigrants. Under most circumstances, these workers are no longer eligible for food stamps and Supplemental Security Income, which aids the elderly and disabled.

New York city and state governments started implementing this measure in September. New applicants for food stamps who are not citizens are denied aid outright. Most of those currently receiving aid will begin being cut off in April; some are already being dropped from the rolls.

The government of Florida has said that some legal immigrants could lose food stamps as of January 1997. All told, more than 1 million legal immigrants will lose food stamps and most other benefits that make up public assistance.

Commenting on the effect of the new law, University of California professor James Wilson told the *New York Times*, "Stigma has been reattached to welfare."

# Communist Party pushes vote for 'lesser evil'

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

As the November 5 presidential and Congressional elections draw closer, the Communist Party USA (CPUSA) is clamoring louder for working people to "defeat the ultraright" by voting for the "lesser evil," i.e. U.S. president William Clinton and other politicians in the Democratic Party. This is "the last, the best chance to prevent a takeover of the White House by the right wing and to break their grip on Congress" declared an October 19 editorial in the *People's Weekly World*, the CP's newspaper.

"The elections will decide whether our country will move forward in a more progressive direction, democratic direction," wrote CPUSA national chair Gus Hall, "or continue moving backward, to the right and even in a dangerously fascist direction."

Hall implied that unless the Democrats win a majority in Congress, independent political action by working people is useless, since the Republicans will "take no heed of protests, demonstrations, or people's pressure." Working people of oppressed nationalities and other "immigrant peoples will continue to be unequal victims of racism, brutality, discrimination, and repression," he declared.

"No one knows better that we ultimately need to change the whole two-party capitalist system," said Hall, but "under the circumstances of a fascist danger we believe the lesser evil tactic is the only winning tactic."

He assures readers that this "tactic" is "permissible" because it's "for the 96 elections only" (emphasis in original). Unlike previous election years, the Communist Party did not even make a pretense of stand-

ing its own candidate for U.S. president.

In the *Communist Manifesto*, Karl Marx explained that the "executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie." In carrying out these responsibilities, the Democrats and the Republicans are political twins and servants of the wealthy class — the barons on Wall Street.

The capitalist two-party system is aimed at drawing workers and others into backing one or another wing of the bourgeoisie. For the rulers, the most important thing is that most people feel a stake in the outcome, not which of the two parties wins a particular election.

That's why the CP's "lesser of evils tactic" is class collaboration — an approach that subordinates the interests of the working class in exchange for a harmonious relationship with the bosses and their political servants. It is a dead end.

Hall says the results of the elections will determine if the fight against racism, for women's rights, and other working class struggles are "easier or more difficult." While the CPUSA chair touts his organization as "Marxist-Leninists and revolutionaries," he expresses total disregard for the power of working people engaged in political action.

U.S. socialist agitator and labor leader Eugene V. Debs rejected the perspective of tying the interests of working people to the capitalist class or their two-party system. "There can be no peace and goodwill between these two essentially antagonistic economic classes," he said. "Nor can this class conflict be covered up or smoothed over." Speaking out against Washington's

war against its European rivals in World War I, Debs stated working people will remain as cannon fodder for the imperialists "as long as you give your support to the political parties of your masters and exploiters." Debs himself was the Socialist Party candidate for U.S. president five times between 1900 and 1920.

## Mobilize votes for the Democrats

The *People's Weekly World* described the October 12 march for immigrant rights in Washington D.C. as a way to "mobilize voters" for the Democrats. While most of the speakers at the rally agreed with that perspective, the demonstration as a whole represented something different. The 20,000 protesters, many of whom were young, reflected the beginning of a movement by immigrants in response to a bipartisan series of attacks on the rights of immigrants and other working people launched by Clinton and Congress. The thousands of young Chicanos present demonstrated a rise in the struggle by that oppressed nationality as well. Many had been part of protests against the 1994 anti-immigrant ballot measure passed in California known as Proposition 187. At the height of those protests two years ago, some 70,000 people marched in Los Angeles for immigrants rights.

A quick review of a few of Clinton's actions — from signing the welfare law to supporting the antigay Defense of Marriage Act — shows the Democratic president has done a good job of advancing the capitalist offensive against working people. An October 15 article in the *New York Times* gave another typical example. It noted that the Clinton administration has reduced federal

aid to the Canton, Ohio, public transportation system from \$1.2 million to \$523,000. This jeopardizes the system, which could shut down, leaving many workers, the handicapped, and elderly people stranded.

Hall acknowledges that working people have become more "alienated from electoral politics than ever before." He tries to explain away the various laws signed by Clinton as a "tendency to cave in to the right."

Instead of urging protests against these assaults on working people, Hall calls for a "massive campaign" to convince workers that it is in our "vital self-interests to vote in this election." Working people will then "have a fighting chance to win the support of the president and Congress through people's political power and pressure," Hall stated.

Communist leader V.I. Lenin, however, exposed the contradiction between "democracy" proclaimed by the capitalists and thousands of subterfuges that turn working people into wage slaves, which opens the "eyes of the people to the rottenness, mendacity and hypocrisy of capitalism." He explained in *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, "It is this contradiction that the agitators and propagandists of socialism are constantly exposing to the people, in order to prepare them for revolution!"

James Harris, the Socialist Workers presidential candidate, presented this perspective at a recent meeting with students at University of Minnesota. "I'm not really interested in your vote," said Harris. "I'm here to urge you to become part of the struggle to change the world."

# Clinton set to keep up bipartisan attack

Continued from front page

Albert Gore, have been campaigning for Democratic candidates in a low-key way.

The president added a new plank on October 19 to the series of undemocratic measures he has promoted in recent months. Seeking to embellish his "tough on drugs" credentials, Clinton said he will push for regulations requiring teenagers to be subjected to drug tests in order to get a driver's license.

"We should use the privilege of a driver's license to demand responsible behavior by young people," he declared.

## Beating drums of 'law and order'

In a late October campaign swing through Birmingham, Alabama, Clinton continued to beat the "law and order" drums. He repeated his vow to put 100,000 more cops on U.S. streets and boasted of his support for youth curfews and school uniforms for young people.

Clinton has signed a number of other bills attacking democratic rights, such as so-called anticrime and antiterrorism laws, which expand the use of the death penalty and narrow the right of appeal of the convicted. Recent anti-immigrant measures double the number of border cops and speed up deportations of immigrants without due process.

"I ran for office in 1992," Clinton said at a campaign stop in Daytona Beach, Florida, "and I told you here in Daytona that I would work to end welfare as we know it." He added, "And that's exactly what we're doing." The new Welfare Reform Act eliminates the Aid for Families with Dependent Children program, a component of the Social Security Act of 1935.

In another attack on entitlements, the Defense of Marriage Act bars federal recognition of homosexual marriages, while denying equal benefits to gay spouses.

When Clinton announced this summer that he would sign the welfare bill, he voiced objections to provisions curtailing benefits to "legal" immigrants and cutting back food stamps — provisions introduced by Republicans in Congress. "But at the rally [in Daytona Beach] the President mentioned none of his reservations," the *New York Times* reported. The president spoke in front of a big colorful sign proclaiming, "Welfare to work, a new beginning."

These measures show that far from being pushed to the right by the Republican-led Congress, the Clinton White House has been leading the offensive against the social conquests the working class won through the labor battles of the 1930s and the civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s.

The two main capitalist parties are in the process of redefining their image, as the framework of capitalist politics — including the whole spectrum of liberalism, from Old Democrats like Sen. Edward Kennedy to the now-dominant New Democrats headed by Clinton — continues to shift to the right.

In August, Republican candidate Dole announced Jack Kemp as his running mate and began to raise the campaign theme of economic growth as an alternative to the "status quo" of job insecurity, falling real wages, and increased social inequality during Clinton's first term. As part of that theme, the Dole-Kemp campaign called for a 15 percent tax cut, while portraying their ticket as protectors of Social Security.

## Clinton doing good job for U.S. rulers

For a while this makeover gave a boost to the Republican campaign and generated an atmosphere of a real contest between the two big-business candidates — something the U.S. rulers need to help maintain the credibility of their two-party system. But the Dole campaign soon lost momentum.

Meanwhile, Clinton has campaigned on his record. Having done a good job so far on behalf of the wealthy U.S. ruling families, the Democratic incumbent has retained their overall support for four more years.

Many businessmen would have preferred Dole. A *New York Times*/CBS News poll in mid-October showed that 65 percent of business executives backed the Republican contender, compared with 25 percent who would vote for Clinton.

The capitalists generally consider the Republicans more reliable servants, as they are less associated with the image of the gains won by the labor movement in the 1930s and the civil rights movement and other struggles in later decades. But Clinton is someone they can work with perfectly well.

In recent weeks, as his campaign flagged, Dole has tried a last-ditch gambit by playing the "character" card against Clinton. Among other things, the Republican candidate raised charges, which appeared originally in the conservative *American Spectator* magazine, that "Asian money" — in particular from an Indonesian conglomerate, the Lippo Group — were being illegally funneled to the Democratic Party for use in the Clinton campaign.

The Dole campaign has been unable to use the Lippo affair to reverse its fortunes, however. Clinton aides replied to the charges by arguing that Dole and the Republicans had accepted large donations from "foreign interests" too, and proceeded to call for "campaign finance reform."

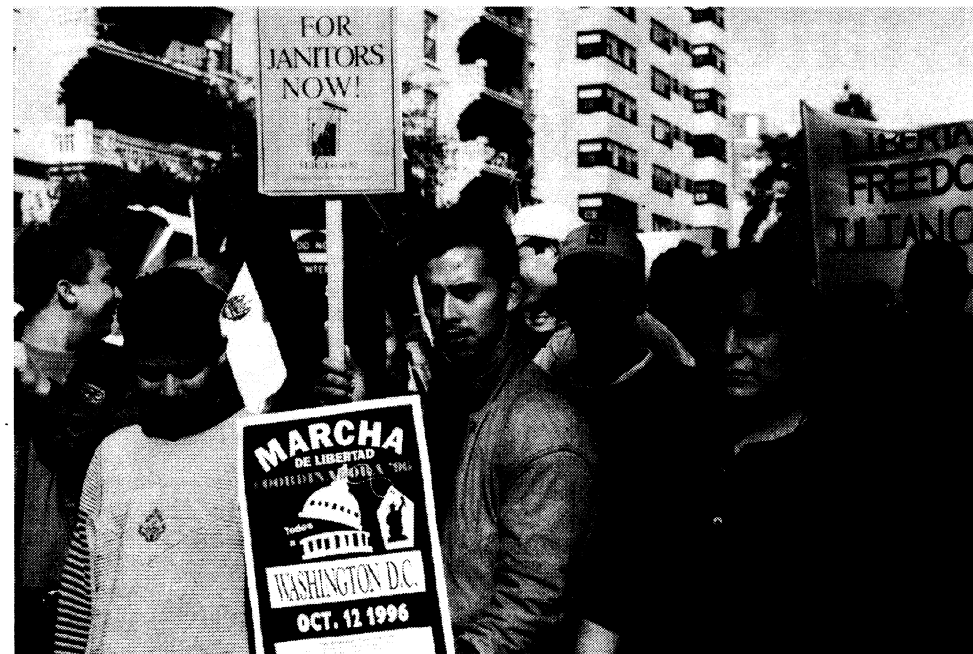
Nonetheless, controversies dogging the Democratic White House such as the Lippo affair and Whitewater real estate dealings, are likely to persist after the elections. Likewise, Republican Newton Gingrich continues to face an investigation by a bipartisan House ethics committee into charges that he improperly used tax-exempt funds for political purposes.

## Collapse of Republican Revolution

With the outcome of the presidential campaign a foregone conclusion, attention has focused on the Congressional races. The Democrats need a net gain of 19 seats to gain a majority in the House and four more seats in the Senate. The fact that this is a possibility reflects the collapse of the so-called Republican Revolution of 1994.

When the 104th Congress opened in 1995, House Speaker Gingrich became the point man in floating trial balloons for rapidly making deep cuts in Medicare and Social Security entitlements.

Although some portions of the Republican "Contract with America" have been signed into law by Clinton, the biggest proposed cuts probed by the Gingrich-led Congress proved to be going too far, too fast for the U.S. rulers' current needs. Some Republicans are even advertising themselves as independent of Gingrich. "If people tell you I'm Newt Gingrich, you tell them they got



Militant/Linda Joyce

Bipartisan assault on working class will continue after the elections, as will resistance, such as that shown at October 12 immigrant rights march in Washington, D.C.

the wrong picture," says an ad for Wisconsin Republican Scott Klug.

Haley Barbour, chairman of the Republican National Committee, made the case for his party to hang onto Congress, even though the White House is out of reach. "If Clinton is reelected, heaven forbid, the last thing the American people want is for him to have a blank check in the form of a liberal Democrat Congress," he said at a Washington news conference.

Clinton for his part has been careful to avoid explicitly partisan appeals in campaign appearances with Democratic candidates, focusing mostly on calling for a big electoral turnout.

"Does Bill Clinton want a Democratic Congress?" Robert Kuttner asked in an October 21 column in the *Washington Post*. "White House support for the rest of the ticket has been underwhelming."

Kuttner noted that many of the Democratic committee chairmen in the House and Senate would be so-called Old Democrats who "would offer a formula for governance quite at odds with Clinton's own New Democrat approach." A Republican-led Congress could allow the Clinton White House to claim a more bipartisan foundation for pursuing its offensive against working people.

## Rulers call for deeper assault

The U.S. rulers, however, are running into the limits of their current economic and social policies in an imperialist world of depression conditions and sharpening competition among the capitalist ruling classes. The gutting of welfare aims to scapegoat certain layers of working people and under-

mine class solidarity, opening the way for more sweeping assaults. But such measures are not enough to reverse the long-term crisis of declining profit rates.

A growing chorus of big-business voices are arguing that the attacks on the social wage begun in Clinton's first term must substantially deepen in the next one.

In an October 23 editorial, the *New York Times* noted that while the Democratic and Republican candidates both posture as defenders of Medicare, the budgets proposed by both parties would cut funding for that social program.

"But the real issue, which neither side will come clean on, is that Medicare *must* be cut," the *Times* editors stated.

A week earlier, the *Washington Post* ran a similar editorial, complaining about a government announcement that Social Security benefits would increase 2.9 percent next year because of annual cost-of-living adjustments codified by law.

Pointing to the Welfare Reform Law, which ended annual "automatic" cost-of-living increases for food stamps, the editors of the *Post* suggested: "Why just food stamps? Why not also Social Security benefits?" They noted that such a cut in Social Security payments would affect much larger numbers of people and cut billions more in social spending.

The *Post* complained that while both Clinton and Dole have proposed naming a bipartisan commission to study ways to cut Social Security, they have not themselves made proposals for cuts. "Maybe that's the ultimate character issue in this election," the paper's editors said, voicing the priorities of the wealthy bondholders.

# GM workers walk as talks continue

Continued from front page

time 2,700 workers at a GM stamping plant also went on strike. The Indianapolis plant supplies 75 percent of the stamped parts that go into GM light trucks. System-wide only a few union locals have reached local settlements. Two days later, GM sent home 2,250 workers at its Fort Wayne, Indiana, assembly plant, when it ran out of parts supplied by the Indianapolis facility.

From the beginning, the UAW officialdom has tried to keep the waters calm in light of the upcoming U.S. presidential elections. Up until very recently any talk of a strike has been pushed to the back burner.

However, in the face of GM demanding major concessions from the union and the recent 20-day Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) strike against GM, UAW president Stephen Yokich has been forced to okay local strikes at key plants.

The GM plant in Janesville hasn't been on strike since the 1970s and was one of the last plants to be shut down during the 17-day strike and lock-out that began in Dayton, Ohio earlier this year. The plant was idled for four and one-half days. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, "GM makes \$10,000 a piece on the vehicles made in Janesville."

The two GM strikes come in the wake of the CAW strike, which ended October 23. Many of the strikers here had followed that strike closely.

Strikers understand that the issues involved in the Canadian strike, such as outsourcing and the selling off of parts plants, are similar to the ones they face.

Some of the workers were inspired by the CAW strike and referred to the occupation of the GM plant in Oshawa, Ontario, by autoworkers a few weeks ago.

Although GM was successful in getting the CAW officialdom to back down on demands to prevent the sale of two parts plants in Oshawa and Windsor, the 20-day strike showed that unionists were willing to fight. This fact didn't go unnoticed by GM bosses and UAW officials. More important, it pointed to the kind of resistance GM will be running up against as the auto giant presses ahead with its drive to shore up profits.

It is no secret now that General Motors wants to sell off or close its parts division, Delphi Automotive Systems. The UAW wants the parts plants to be included in the contract's guarantee to maintain 95 percent of union jobs over the next three years while the head of GM's parts unit, J.T. Battenberg disagreed, "We can't stay in business where we aren't competitive," he declared.

GM wants to eliminate 45,000 jobs in order to compete with its rivals. To bring this about, GM is demanding that what it refers to as "troubled" plants be excluded from the minimum-employment provision hammered out by the Ford/UAW agreement.

In recent weeks more of the truth about the much-heralded Ford agreement is coming to the surface. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, "Ford's lead labor negotiator, Peter Pestillo, recently told analysts that the minimum-employment level excludes new hires and troubled businesses. Those

two exceptions will allow Ford to reduce its UAW employment to 92,000 from 103,000. And when the 5% reduction is taken from the lower number, that leaves Ford with a minimum employment level of 87,000 UAW employees — a total reduction of 15%."

In addition, Ford now says it has three "troubled" plants and plans to outsource its seat, glass, and power-generation businesses.

The UAW has reached agreements with both Ford Motor Co. and Chrysler in the United States. The CAW has set a strike deadline of November 6 against Ford, one day after the U.S. presidential elections.

One of the highlights of the picket lines in Janesville are the new hires who joined in. Many strikers talked about the need to hire younger workers into the plant with the amount of retirement that has been taking place.

Two picketers who had only been working for a week and a half were enthusiastic about the strike. Jodie Loveland, 28 and a member of Local 95, explained, "The new hires are here because our jobs are on the line too."

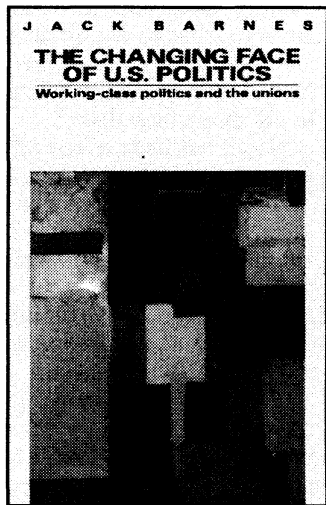
Another new hire, 35-year-old Scott Kukuk, said, "I saw on the news last night that we were on strike, so I called up the union hall, went down there at eight this morning, and signed up for picket duty."

Frank Forrestal is a member of UAW Local 551, at Ford Motor Co. in Chicago. Tami Peterson is a member of the Young Socialists.



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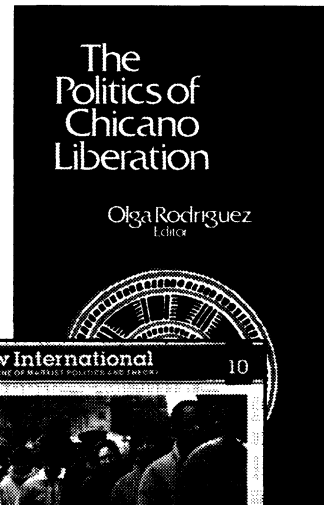


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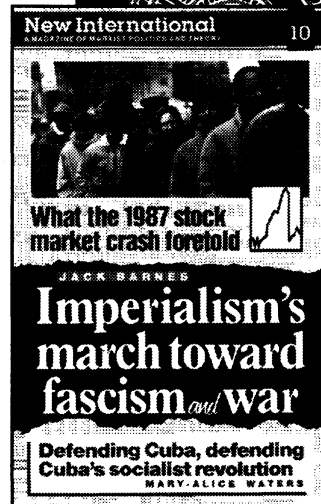
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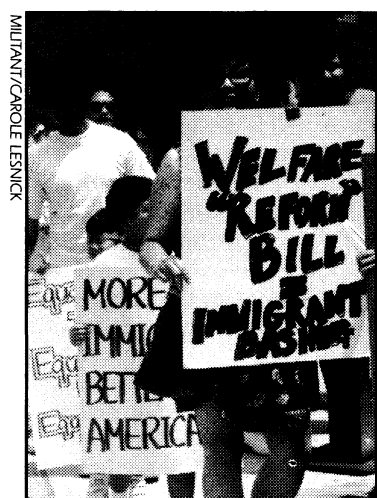
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August 1996 protest against Welfare Reform Act in Los Angeles

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National Black Independent Political Party contingent at 1985 demonstration in Washington, D.C.



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# Ralph Nader: a bourgeois politician

BY NICK SANDS

SAN FRANCISCO — Ralph Nader, the Green Party candidate for U.S. president, is on the ballot in California and 20 other states. Some youth and others attracted to Nader's campaign praise his attacks on big corporations as a prime example of his "alternative course."

But a careful look at Nader's own words demonstrates that his campaign is designed to keep those attracted to it trapped in the dead end of capitalist politics. His aim is to reform the capitalist system.

The Green Party claims 100,000 support-

## AS I SEE IT

ers nationally. This party operates in the electoral arena, raising demands that focus on the preservation of the environment as it seeks to build a base in the middle class. Their nominee, Nader, has a long track record in the public spotlight as a "consumer advocate." His 1965 book *Unsafe at Any Speed*, which targeted the lack of safety in Chevrolet Corvair cars, catapulted Nader into national attention. He has testified before Congress on numerous occasions over the years. He is a proponent of a what he terms "tools of democracy" that he says will strengthen "citizen" participation in politics.

After accepting the Green Party nomination, Nader claimed that he would not campaign on the Green platform and that he would not join that party. In introducing his candidacy, Nader stated that the Democrats are in "protective imitation" of the Repub-

licans. "They're both totally beholden to corporate America, and the great American public be damned."

"We have government by the Exxons, of the Du Ponts, and for the General Motors," Nader said in his Green Party acceptance speech in Los Angeles in August.

In a recent interview with the *San Francisco Chronicle*, Nader claimed he is trying to "build a new political party and progressive force in America."

### Nader aims to pressure Democrats

But in other interviews in the big-business media, Nader clarified that his candidacy is intended to put pressure on the Democratic Party. It provides an outlet within the framework of capitalist politics for those unhappy with the shift to the right of bourgeois politics and who want Democratic president William Jefferson Clinton and that party's representatives in Congress to be more sympathetic to their needs.

"If I really wanted to beat Clinton, I would get out, raise \$3 million or \$4 million and maybe provide the margin for his defeat. That's not the purpose of this candidacy," Nader told the *New York Times Magazine*. "Corporations will always try to pull the Democratic Party to the right, and there's got to be a pull to the left. If the Democratic Party thinks it's going to lose 5 percent of the vote — locally, nationally — they'll pay more attention."

Nader added in another interview that he is running to "bring more young people into progressive politics," and to help ensure that the Greens are on the ballot in numerous states for future elections.

When asked about the Green Party plat-

form and its plank in support of same-sex marriage, Nader said, "Well there's about 120 different topics, and I'm not informed about a lot of them. So I don't take stands on things I'm not informed about.... I want to focus on strengthening democracy in concrete ways, concerning the various roles people play—voter, citizen, consumer, taxpayer, worker, shareholder, investor."

When the interviewer pressed him about his stance on abortion rights, the consumer advocate stated, "I'm not talking about social-relation issues. I'm not talking about issues like Haiti or North Korea because I don't want to blur the focus."

Nader's comments were made this fall as the U.S. government launched missile attacks on Iraq, the Palestinians resisted Israel's expansionist aggression, and Clinton signed bills assailing welfare and banning same-sex marriages.

What about Nader's criticisms of the large corporations, the Du Ponts and Exxon's?

The large corporations are part and parcel of the capitalist system. Corporations are organized to protect and maximize the profits of the tiny majority who rule this country in their own interest. The ruling rich use their two bourgeois parties — the Democrats and Republicans — to safeguard these interests. They tolerate and occasionally encourage third party bids like those of Ross Perot in 1992 and 1996 and Nader's campaign this year as safety valves within the framework of bourgeois politics as long as they don't challenge their two-party system.

Nader's attacks on the corporations are designed to appeal to the frustrations and resentment of the middle class as they are

squeezed by the ruling families. Nader pushes his "tools of democracy" project claiming citizens can use "democratic" institutions to reign in the corporations and to clean up bourgeois politics.

This hot air ignores the fact that the United States is a class divided society, and that workers and the ruling families have conflicting interests. As their profit rates fall and competition with their international rivals heats up under mounting worldwide depression conditions, the rulers in this country along with their imperialist rivals are compelled to assault the living standard and past social gains of the working class. Nader's use of the term "citizen" is designed to obfuscate these facts.

Nader has been a leading critic in bourgeois politics of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). He told the *Chronicle*, "Nobody predicted that the U.S. government would have to have a package of \$50 billion to bail out the crooked Mexican government regime and its billionaire oligarchs. Number two, NAFTA promised us more jobs. We've lost almost 400,000 jobs because we have moved from a trade surplus in Mexico to probably a \$10 billion trade deficit. And we have a deficit. We're exporting jobs — probably about 350,000 to 400,000 jobs. Thirdly," said Nader, "it's turned out badly for most of the Mexican people; they're poorer, they're more unemployed and they're ravaged by a vicious inflation."

Nader concluded his remarks on NAFTA by stating, "the borders are a nightmare, more smuggling, more pollution, more infectious diseases. The environmental commissions are toothless."

### NAFTA comments mirror Buchanan

On one level Nader's remarks about U.S. job loss combined with fake "sympathy" for the Mexican workers parallels the outlook of the U.S. trade union officialdom whose opposition to NAFTA is based on protecting the "American" jobs that provide these dues bandits with a hefty income stream and a comfortable lifestyle.

On another level Nader's comments on the "border" more closely mirror the coarse, demeaning remarks directed toward Mexican working people made by incipient fascist politician Patrick Buchanan. Nader has even taken to praising both Buchanan's criticisms of NAFTA and the rightist's anti-corporate rhetoric. In a *Mother Jones* magazine interview last summer, Nader said, "I think he's [Buchanan] learned a lot in the last few years about corporate power, especially in the context of the NAFTA and GATT fights.... And so he's called a nativist or a nationalist, but he's beginning to have a more thorough conservative critique of radical corporatism. And if he can split the genuine conservatives from the corporatists who masquerade as conservatives, he'll be making quite a contribution to American politics. There is nothing conservative about big corporations," emphasized Nader.

The Naderite-Green Party bourgeois campaign is no more an alternative to the Democrats and Republicans than Ross Perot's Reform Party, which also operates as a pressure group within the framework of the two-party capitalist system.

Socialist Workers Party candidates James Harris and Laura Garza explain that NAFTA is designed by the capitalists of the United States, Mexico, and Canada to carry through a violent transformation of relations on the land in Mexico and provide a huge labor pool for a hoped-for rapid industrialization of that country.

Harris and Garza explain that there is no "we" between workers and the ruling families. The socialist candidates urge common action by workers on both sides of the border in defense of our common class interests. The trade union officialdom's opposition to NAFTA in order to "save American jobs" cuts across building international working-class solidarity.

In their campaign literature Harris and Garza note that nationalist and chauvinist appeals like the ones generated by Ralph Nader are stock in trade "of bourgeois politicians as they attempt to bring their respective populations behind the 'national interests,' be they trading policies or war moves." It is the socialist perspective that provides an alternative to capitalism's march toward fascism and war.

## Cuban rightists outmobilized in Florida

BY ERNIE MAILHOT

MIAMI — "Helms-Burton is criminal" and "Cuba Sí, Bloqueo No!" (Yes to Cuba! No to the blockade!) resounded from the 130 protesters demonstrating not far from the posh Biltmore Hotel in Coral Gables October 22. Inside, President William Jefferson Clinton was speaking at a campaign dinner which raised \$2 million.

Only a few yards from the protest 80 counterprotesters organized by Cuban Unity, Alpha 66, and other ultrarightists chanted "Helms-Burton Sí" and yelled insults at those across the way. A line of police separated the two rallies.

The Miami Coalition to End the U.S. Embargo of Cuba, the Antonio Maceo Brigade, and the Alliance of Workers of the Cuban Community were among the main builders of the rally against the so-called Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act, also known as the Helms-Burton law. The measure, signed by Clinton March 12, tightened Washington's embargo and travel ban on Cuba.

A newly formed group called the Latin American Youth Front also called for people to come out to oppose the Helms-Burton law, while at the same time supporting Clinton. For more than a week before the Clinton dinner, Francisco Aruca, who hosts the radio talk show "Ayer en Miami" (Yesterday in Miami) on Radio Progreso, repeatedly called for support to the action called by the Front. He explained that the only signs that would be allowed would be those supporting Clinton and opposing the Helms-Burton Law.

When the rally against the economic blockade of Cuba began, most of the protesters scooped up the 70 hand-lettered signs that had been brought by the Antonio Maceo Brigade and participated in a spirited and united picket line. None of these signs called for support to Clinton. After a half hour or so about 20 professionally made signs saying "Clinton Sí, Helms-Burton No" arrived. These were also carried by some of the protesters.

A few in the crowd tried to start a chant "Clinton Sí, Bloqueo No!" but this was overwhelmed by those chanting "Cuba Sí Bloqueo No!" When the rightists saw the Clinton signs some of them yelled back, "He's on our side."

The rightists were visibly upset that they had been outmobilized. They yelled that those protesting the Helms-Burton law were prostitutes and paid agents of Cuba. The next day calls to some of the Spanish-lan-



October 22 demonstration at Clinton banquet in Miami protesting Helms-Burton law

guage radio shows bewailed the small number of right-wing demonstrators.

This successful demonstration against the Democratic and Republican parties' attacks on Cuba came at a time of heightened conflict among those in the Miami Cuban-American community who actively oppose the Cuban revolution. After Hurricane Lili pounded western Cuba October 18, the Catholic Church in Miami launched an effort to raise humanitarian aid for Cuba, which was backed by radio station WQBA. This station, known as La Cubanísima, has a long history of attacking the Cuban revolution and opposing all aid to Cuba.

Commentators on WQBA went out of their way to show that they hadn't changed their rightist stance toward Cuba. They organized to write "exilio" (exile) on the aid packages, supposedly to stop the Cuban government from stealing it, but also in an attempt to take advantage of the storm damage to legitimize the right wing in Miami.

The debate over hurricane aid has deepened splits among the rightists. Spanish-language commentators on radio stations WCMQ and Radio Mambí denounced the sending of aid, claiming that none of it would reach the Cuban people and accusing aid supporters of betrayal. "We know that this will be confiscated by the government and sold to tourists," was an often heard comment on these shows.

Some ultrarightists, such as Jorge Mas Canosa from the Cuban American National

Foundation (CANF) said they support the aid effort. The CANF, in particular, tried to hedge this, however, by saying that they were looking for another avenue to deliver the supplies since Caritas, the Catholic agency responsible for distributing the aid in Cuba, was not reliable.

Reverend Francisco Santana, a Catholic priest well known for his opposition to Cuba who is helping to coordinate the church's effort in Miami, told the press that he had received at least 14 harassing calls including several bomb threats.

Thousands of Cuban-Americans in Miami have responded to the call for aid to Cuba, in spite of the fierce opposition by WCMQ, Radio Mambí, and other right-wing groups. After only a few days Catholic Church officials reported they had collected more than 220,000 pounds of foodstuffs. An editorial in the October 22 *Miami Herald* acknowledged that "thousands of exiles are overfilling warehouses." The aid will go directly to Caritas in Cuba, which will oversee its distribution.

The Alliance of Workers of the Cuban Community, the Miami Coalition to End the Embargo of Cuba, the Antonio Maceo Brigade, and the Socialist Workers Party are among the other groups that are gathering aid for Cuba.

Ernie Mailhot is a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees in Miami.



# Toronto protests

Continued from front page

- cut \$1 billion per year from public school funding, with 10,000 layoff notices to teachers and school staff;
- eliminated all funding for junior kindergarten, which last year enrolled 100,000 children;
- cut social assistance rates by 22 percent and has begun to introduce mandatory "workfare";
- canceled 390 cooperative and non-profit housing projects, while moving toward elimination of rent controls;
- and raised college fees by 15 percent and university fees from 10 percent to 20 percent.

"Hey hey, ho ho, Mike Harris has got to go!" and "Harris cuts have got to go!" resounded throughout the streets. "Education is our right, we will not give up the fight," was a popular chant among students. Some workers joined in chants of "Hey Mike, hey Harris, we'll shut you down like Paris," identifying with the massive strikes and demonstrations by workers and youth in France.

## Citywide strike action

Protesters were jubilant about the victory they had scored in the citywide shutdown the day before — Friday, October 25. Similar to the four previous days of protest in London, Hamilton, Kitchener, and Peterborough against the Ontario provincial government, "cross-picketing" was organized for the Days of Action. This is a strategy in which workers picketed not their own factory but a different one, in order to avoid charges of violating the no-strike provisions of union contracts.

Picketing was organized at some 300 work sites in Metropolitan Toronto, many of which were closed by the strike. There was no postal service, garbage collection or other city services. All construction sites in the city were shut down.

The biggest test of strength came at the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC), which carries 1.3 million passengers every weekday. TTC management obtained an order from the Ontario Labor Relations Board prohibiting most picketing of transit facilities. The injunction was simply ignored, as unionists picketed TTC stations, subway yards, and streetcar and bus barns beginning at 2:30 am.

The vast majority of drivers and other TTC workers either stayed home or chose not to cross the picket lines. The handful who tried to cross were turned back by pickets. TTC officials promised to schedule an announcement of when they might try to resume service, but by mid-afternoon they had to admit defeat. "We took our best shot and we lost," said TTC general manager David Gunn.

The contingent of TTC workers, members of the Amalgamated Transit Union, was cheered all along the October 26 march.

Picket lines usually included workers from several different unions, who welcomed the chance to greet each other and exchange experiences. Gaetan Shank is a nickel mine worker who had come with his son and a group of other mine unionists from Sudbury, five hours north of Toronto. He told the *Militant* he is especially concerned about the cuts in compensation to injured workers — a 5 percent reduction in benefits already and threats of bigger cuts to come. He also pointed out that the Harris government is weakening mine safety enforcement and proposes to eliminate the le-

gal limit of eight-hour shifts in underground mining.

Shank added that the government is trying to close two of the three hospitals in Sudbury. "There's a meeting every night" to protest the closings, he said.

## Companies forced to shut down

De Havilland Aircraft is the largest industrial plant in the Metropolitan Toronto area, with 2,800 production workers represented by the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW). Like the TTC, de Havilland got a Labor Board order declaring a walkout on October 25 to be an illegal work stoppage. When faced with the pledge by union officials that the plant would be picketed regardless of any injunction, the company backed down and shut for the day.

A similar story unfolded at S.A. Armstrong, a pump manufacturer where 75 members of the United Steelworkers have been on strike for six months. The company has hired scabs — a union-busting tactic they are free to use since the Harris government repealed the previous anti-scab law.

Expecting to be targeted by the Metro Days of Action, the company obtained a three-day injunction against expanded picketing. But as October 25 drew closer, the factory owners decided it was more prudent to close for the day and even welded shut the front doors of the plant.

Some 400 to 500 unionists — mostly from other Steelworkers locals but also groups from the Machinists, Auto Workers and Power Workers, marched single file all around the closed plant on October 25, staying across the street in order not to break the injunction.

## Education — a universal right

Teachers and members of CUPE (Canadian Union of Public Employees), and OPSEU (Ontario Public Service Employees Union) made up by far the largest contingents at the huge march on October 26. These workers are among the first to feel



Militant/ Holly Harkness

October 25 rally, protesting cuts in education, was part of Toronto Days of Action.

the impact of government spending cuts.

Several teachers and students interviewed by the *Militant* described the toll of education funding cuts — teachers laid off, larger class sizes, fewer textbooks and materials, transportation cut, food programs cut, and entire programs eliminated.

Many placards, both printed and handmade, carried messages such as "Access to education — a universal right," and "Education — just for the rich?"

Contingents from the industrial unions were smaller. Some unionists wore stickers and T-shirts promoting the New Democratic Party, the social-democratic party that formed the Ontario government before losing to the Conservatives in the last election. There was also a small contingent from the NDP itself.

For its part, the Harris government vowed not to change its policies despite massive public opposition. "We will stay the course," Harris told the Tory party convention. "We will not stop, not now, not a year from now." Harris's show of intransigence failed to daunt the spirit of the tens of thousands who joined the Days of Action.

"We have to do this, we don't have any

choice," said Ras Aman, a 17-year-old high school student, originally from El Salvador. "It's for our future."

George Kreis is a tenth grade student at Oakwood Collegiate. "There are 1,200 at our school and only 12 came to class yesterday," he told the *Militant*. "It was cool to shut the city down yesterday to show we are opposed to the cuts and are not going to stand for it. We gave Mike Harris a message."

Miguel San Vicente, vice president of Steelworkers Local 6917 at S.A. Armstrong, was cheered when he appealed for support. He said people "are being forced off the welfare rolls by the cutbacks to scab in our plant.... If you want to fight the anti-worker, anti-union policies of Mike Harris, the time to fight is now at S.A. Armstrong. So brothers and sisters, come out to our picket lines and give us support so we can win."

*John Steele is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 2113 at Ford Electronics. John Sarge, a member of United Auto Workers Local 900 in Detroit, contributed to this article.*

# Steel strike is firm at Wheeling-Pitt

BY TONY DUTROW

FOLLANSBEE, West Virginia — Some 4,500 Steelworkers remain solid in their month-long strike against Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel, the ninth largest integrated steel producer in the United States. The walkout, which began October 1, has shut eight mills in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia.

No negotiations have occurred since the bosses handed the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) a final offer September 27. That offer incorporated a substandard pension plan that denies the workers the right to retire after working 30 years for the company. The unionists are also demanding a \$40-per-year-of-service pension on a par with the other steel companies.

Donald Finley, an operator on the coke mill's railroad here, was walking the picket line October 27. He pointed across the Ohio river to the blast furnaces now silent at the mills in Steubenville and Mingo Junction, Ohio. Finley said the stakes are very high in this and thinks the strike will be a long one. He's got 42 years in the mill.

Wheeling-Pitt, Finley said, has one of the highest profits per ton of steel in the industry. "If we go down on this, then the rest of the pension funds will go down," he said.

Another worker at the mill, Joe Kesegy, who has worked 40 years for the company said, "My pension was frozen at 29 years of service basically and they haven't put a dime into the plan since the 1985 bankruptcy changed the agreement to a deferred pension plan."

Two days after the strikers hit the bricks, Wheeling-Pitt company attorneys won a court injunction in Ohio limiting pickets and the next day in West Virginia. Jefferson County, Ohio, Common Pleas Judge Dominick Olivito signed an order October 3 limiting pickets at gates and allowing free access to some traffic in and out of the mill.

Gregg Warren, public relations manager for Wheeling-Pitt charged that this ruling was necessary for the Ohio plants because allegedly certain personnel were holed up in the plants, and stayed "for fear they would be prevented from returning by striking USWA-represented employees."

On October 4, First Circuit Court Judge

Steven Narick ordered that West Virginia pickets be limited to eight strikers per gate. His ruling "captures what we asked for in essence," gloated Wheeling-Pitt's corporate attorney.

The ruling claims that the order is needed to prevent "mass picketing and misconduct," specifically at the Follansbee, West Virginia, coke plant. In fact, the union decided to keep the ovens running at the plant to not damage them, to head off this kind of violence baiting.

## Strikers keep fighting spirit

Steelworkers have not allowed the injunctions to lower their spirit.

During a recent visit, the union hall in Mingo Junction, Ohio, was a beehive of activity. The head cook for the strike kitchen in the union hall basement beamed when he saw the *Militant's* coverage of the Palestinian struggle.

Hassan Ziad, a Palestinian who was born in East Jerusalem, has been in the United States for 30 years. For 23 of those years he's worked at Wheeling-Pitt and works on the railroad track gang. This is a job the steel giant hopes to contract out. During hard times, Hassan learned the culinary arts and went to work for a nearby hotel. Now he volunteers this skill, training others and keeping a top-notch kitchen open for strikers.

Sharon Lelless has worked in the mill as a production worker in the sinter plant — an ingredient used in blast furnaces to produce steel — for 17 years. She's co-chair of the Women's Committee. Lelless explained that of the 100 women out of the 2,600 workers in the mill, at least 10 are regularly working on the committee. "But most of the 30 women that pull regular duty here are like Cheryl over there painting signs," Lelless adds. Cheryl yells over to the *Militant* reporters that her fiancée works in the mill.

"To keep our cause in the public eye, we're going to ask everyone to wear blue ribbons," Lelless said. Both she and Cheryl were making giant cardboard blue ribbons with Local 1190 written on them. "We're going to put them on telephone poles, at

picket gates, and in store windows."

Strikers set up an informational picket line October 19 at Wheeling Downs, the famous and very profitable dog racing track, 50 percent owned by WHX, which is also part owner of Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel. One of the colorful, hand painted signs stashed along the wall in the union hall, depicted a greyhound racer number "Local 1190." The caption reads, "Our Pensions are Going to the Dogs."

Sandi Daugherty, who along with Lelless chairs the women's committee, explained that the Wheeling Downs management and WHX went to court to block their action at the popular race track. "We had a great turnout. About 30 of us showed up including strikers from Martins Ferry, Yorkville, and our mill. Also steelworkers from the nearby Ormet titanium mill came to show their solidarity."

"It was pouring down rain, but we held up our flyers and signs though the guards told us we couldn't. They even told us to get rid of the Local 1190 dog, but we kept him on the line," said Daugherty, who works in the cold strip mill.

The October 26 Steubenville *Herald-Star* reported that Circuit Court Judge Fred Risovich ruled against WHX saying the informational picketers were within their First Amendment right to demonstrate and distribute handbills.

On October 12, the AFL-CIO sponsored a "Stand Up For Ohio Families" rally at the Steubenville Big Red High School to urge the defeat of Republican Congressman Robert Ney. Strikers, who made up the majority of the rally brought hand-lettered signs demanding Ron LaBow, president of WHX, negotiate on the union's pension proposal. "LaBow Stop Hogging the Funds" was painted on one sign held by a striker.

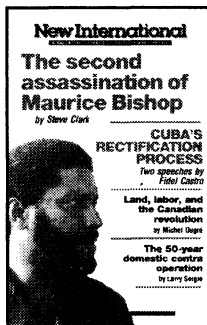
Messages of support and solidarity can be sent to USWA Local 1190, 227 So. Third St., Steubenville, Ohio 43952-2932, (614) 283-3356.

*Tony Dutrow is a member of USWA Local 1557 in Pittsburgh. Dave Sandor, a member of USWA Local 3403 from Morgantown, West Virginia, contributed to this article.*

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in **New International no. 6**

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# Affirmative action debate in California

Continued from front page

firmative action is a discriminatory system that unfairly grants privileges to Blacks, women, and others. They argue that affirmative action is divisive, and claim that it constitutes "reverse discrimination" that denies "qualified" white men jobs in favor of less "qualified" minorities and women.

The measure's proponents have tried hard to pitch their reactionary measure as a legacy of the civil rights battles against Jim Crow segregation. The California Republican Party planned to air a television ad supporting Proposition 209 quoting Martin Luther King Jr. However, protest by the King estate and wide publicity forced the Republican Party to pull the ad.

Meanwhile, Republican presidential candidate Robert Dole has jumped on the 209 bandwagon in hopes of shoring up his electoral chances in California, where he runs far behind William Clinton in the polls. Until recently, the Dole campaign had taken its distance from what vice-presidential candidate Jack Kemp called a divisive "wedge issue."

The campaign against affirmative action has been bipartisan from the outset. As president, Clinton ordered a review of all federal affirmative action programs with an eye toward cutting them back. He has not made affirmative action a feature of his election campaign, prompting some opponents of Proposition 209 here to charge that they are getting little help from the Democratic Party.

Omari Musa, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress in the 9th C.D. (Oakland/

Berkeley), told the *Militant*, "Affirmative action and the fight around Proposition 209 has been one of the central political issues in this election, along with the fight for immigrant rights." The Socialist Workers candidates in California are calling for a "No" vote on Proposition 209, and urging workers and young people to join in defending affirmative action.

In a speech October 28 in San Diego, Dole called on voters to "guarantee that race will find no significance in the laws of California. [Proposition 209] will elevate individual civil rights above group entitlements."

Dole claimed affirmative action had been a failure for Blacks. "Every time I drive to work in Washington, D.C. or drive down North Capital Street I see dozens of Black men without work, I say to myself, 'What has this law done for them. Absolutely nothing.'" While admitting that racism still exists, Dole proposed to bring "a growing economy to every community. Give people an opportunity to make it in the private sector. They don't need quotas and preferences."

## Economic crisis hits Blacks, Latinos

The capitalist economic crisis has hit Blacks, Latinos, and Native Americans as well as women particularly hard. An anti-209 brochure issued by the American Civil Liberties Union explains that today the unemployment rate for Black men remains double that of whites, and it is higher for Latino men. About 31 percent of Black fami-

lies in California make less than \$15,000 a year, as do 25 percent of Latino families, compared to 16 percent of whites. The net worth of African-Americans in the state averages \$9,359, compared with \$44,980 for whites. Pay rates for women remain at 71 cents for each dollar earned by men, and these rates are even lower for women of oppressed nationalities.

In addition, Blacks and other oppressed nationalities face the worsening living conditions, police violence, crumbling schools, and inadequate housing characteristic of increasing resegregation throughout the United States.

"The attacks by the University of California Board of Regents became the opening shots in the current drive to gut affirmative action in California," noted Musa. "These actions are being repeated in other states and by the federal government. Proposition 209 is the next step in this offensive."

The passage of Proposition 209 will be used by opponents of affirmative action to go after gains Blacks, women, and Latinos have won in basic industry, Musa added.

At the University of California, the Board of Regents voted in 1995 to end affir-

mative action in student admissions and faculty hiring. The Regents' plans were met with student-led protests and opposition by university officials and faculty. Despite the protests, the new measures are being implemented.

UC officials now estimate that non-Asian-American minority freshman enrollment at the Berkeley campus will drop from 23 percent this year to 12.5 percent of the

Continued on Page 14



Militant/Jean Armbruster

August march for affirmative action in San Diego

## CALENDAR

### CALIFORNIA

#### Los Angeles

**Pathfinder \$125,000 Fund Rally.** Speakers: Gale Shangold, garment unionist and Pathfinder sales representative; Edmundo Fernández, Young Socialists. Sat., Nov. 9, 8 p.m. Dessert Buffet: 7 p.m. 2546 W. Pico Blvd. (1 1/2 blocks west of Vermont) (213) 380-9460.

### FLORIDA

#### Miami

**Class: "Russian Revolution: Lessons for Today"** by Ma'mud Shirvani. Sponsored by Young Socialists and Socialist Workers Party. Donation: Brunch \$3/Class \$2. 137 N.E. 54th St. Translation into Spanish and French. Tel: (305) 756-9917.

### PENNSYLVANIA

#### Philadelphia

**Showing of "Ten Days that Shook the World"** Film of the Russian Revolution. Thurs., Nov. 14, 7 p.m. Sponsored by Young Socialists. 1906 South St. Tel: (215) 546-8218.

### TEXAS

#### Houston

**Cuba: Moving into the 21st Century.** Speaker: Dagoberto Rodríguez, First Secretary, Cuban Interests Section, Washington, D.C. Sponsored by Ad Hoc Committee to Tour Dagoberto Rodríguez. Co-hosts: Cuba Friendship Committee, Hispanic Student Association, MECha, Latina Coalition, La Raza Student Alliance, Pan-African People for Progressive Action (PAPPA), Student Program Board, University of Houston NOW, University of Houston-University of Havana Sister Campus Project, Young Socialists. Tue., Nov. 12, 7 p.m. University of Houston, Lafitte Room, University Center (Gate 1, Calhoun St. entrance).

**How Cuba Has Dealt with Racism.** Speaker: Dagoberto Rodríguez, First Secretary of the Cuban Interests Section, Washington, D.C. Co-hosts: Ada Edwards, Shrine of the Black Madonna; Lenwood Johnson, Allen Parkway Village Residents Council; Minister Robert Muhammed, Nation of Islam; Deloyd Parker, Shape Community Center. Wed., Nov. 13, 7:30 p.m. Shrine of the Black Madonna, 5309 Martin Luther King Blvd. (1 mile North of 610 South). Dagoberto Rodríguez will also be speaking in San Antonio, Harlingen, and Edinburg, Texas. For further information call Professor Tom Kleven at (713) 313-7355.

#### San Benito

**Cuba: Moving into the 21st Century.** Speaker: Dagoberto Rodríguez, First Secretary of the Cuban Interests Section, Washington, D.C. Sponsored by Ad Hoc Committee to Tour Dagoberto Rodríguez: co-sponsors: Jonathan Jones, Coordinator, Refugee Immigrant Rights Coalition, Rio Grande Valley; Rogelio Nunez, Executive Director, Proyecto Libertad, Harlingen. Thurs. Nov. 14, 7:30 p.m. San Benito Community Center, 210 East Haywood. For more information call (210) 425-9552.

## MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

### FLORIDA

#### Miami

**Capitalism's World Disorder.** Speaker: Ma'mud Shirvani, who recently traveled to the Middle East and Central Asia, will discuss developments in that region. Sat., Nov. 9, 7:30 p.m. 137 N.E. 54th St. Donation: \$5. Translation into Spanish and French. Tel: (305) 756-1020.

### PENNSYLVANIA

#### Philadelphia

**The Fight for Immigrant Rights Today.** Speakers: Nelson Carrasquillo, CATA, a farm workers support committee in Vineland, New Jersey; Kathy Mickells, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Nov. 8, 7:30 p.m. 1906 South St. Donation: \$4.

Tel: (215) 546-8218.

### Pittsburgh

**No to the 'Defense of Marriage Act'! End Anti-Gay Discrimination!** Speaker: Troy Blackwood, Gay rights activist from Morgantown, West Virginia. 1103 E. Carson St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (412) 381-9785.

### BRITAIN

#### Manchester

**Workers Resistance in France — an Eyewitness Report.** Fri., Nov. 8, 7 p.m. 60 Shudehill, Unit 4. Donation: £2. Tel: 0161-839-1766.

### CANADA

#### Vancouver

**Chinese People from Around the World Demonstrate To Defend Diaoyutai Islands from Japanese Militarism.** Speakers: Beverly Bernardo, Communist League, and laid off member of Union of Needle, Industrial and Textile Employees. Fri., Nov. 8, 7:30 p.m. 3967 Main St. (Between 23 and 24 Ave.). Donation: \$4. Tel: (604) 872-8343.

### NEW ZEALAND

#### Auckland

**The Bloody Birth of Capitalism in New Zealand.** Speaker: Terry Coggan, Communist League. Fri., Nov. 8, 7 p.m. La Gonda Arcade, 203 Karangahape Road. Donation: \$3. Tel: (9) 379-075.

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70543,1637

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**London:** 47 The Cut. Postal code: SE1 8LL. Tel: 0171-928-7993. Compuserve: 101515,2702

**Manchester:** Unit 4, 60 Shudehill. Postal code: M4 4AA. Tel: 0161-839-1766.

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**Paris:** MBE 201, 208 rue de la Convention. Postal code: 75015. Tel: (1) 47-26-58-21. Compuserve: 73504,442

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**Reykjavik:** Klappartíg 26. Mailing address: P. Box 233, 121 Reykjavik. Tel: 552 5502. INTERNET: gphssg@treknet.is

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**Christchurch:** 199 High St. Postal address: P.O. Box 22-530. Tel: (3) 365-6055. Compuserve: 100250,1511

### SWEDEN

**Stockholm:** Vikingagatan 10 (T-bana St Eriksplan). Postal code: S-113 42. Tel: (08) 31 69 33. Compuserve: 100416,2362



**Ingrates** — A poll found that East Germans "are most angry about unemployment... most upset about social welfare cuts. They are no longer satisfied with earning

large quantities of dangerous pesticides, which were almost certainly one of the causes of the mysterious illnesses afflicting hundreds of veterans, the Ministry of Defense admitted." — The British *Guardian*.

**The healthy society** — A medical survey found that 37 million U.S. people have no medical insurance. As a result, 20 million of these suffered health and/or financial problems.

**Medical imperialism?** — "Industry has certainly approached international market as a normal part of their operations and so why shouldn't hospitals," argues Peter Van Etten, president of Stanford

Medical Center, which is building an imaging center in Singapore. It will do CAT scans and mammograms and refer patients to the Palo Alto hospital complex.

**Double whammy** — We reported that Iowa Republicans rapped the 4-H clubs for heading toward socialism (They gave contest ribbons to all participants instead of to winners.) Now we learn that a 4-H goals statement failed to mention "free enterprise" or "work ethic." Also, they were seen as promoting homosexuality. Some high schoolers had requested workshops on alternate life styles.

**Shrinking institution** — In the

past 25 years, Britain's marriage rate has dropped more than 50 percent, a study found, and "traditional" marriages are no longer the norm. This is attributed to a growth of "individualism" and an increasing exercise of choice on how to live.

**No more 'Until death do us part'** — The Heirloom Pendant Collection — as featured at the National Funeral Directors convention — offers white or yellow gold pendants, with diamonds, to stash a bit of the ashes, or a lock of hair, of a dearly departed. From \$1,900 to \$10,000.

**He must really work hard** — In

London, Christian Aid estimated that a Chinese Nike worker would have to put in nine hours a day, six days a week for 15 centuries to earn the \$1.5 million pocketed last year by UK Nike boss Phil Knight.

**Losing faith?** — Yvonne Morabito, a financial astrologer, advises that the movements of Pluto and Neptune suggest that a rising dollar will draw overseas investors to U.S. stocks. But, counters Bloomberg Business News, pending developments "may bring investors down to earth.... A slowing economy and a fear of stock market heights could curb the market's gains."



Harry Ring

salaries 20 percent lower than western counterparts."

**Sound familiar?** — "British troops in the Gulf were exposed to

# Workers have right to organize self-defense

Below are excerpts of *Socialism on Trial*, published by Pathfinder Press. The book is the official record of the testimony by James P. Cannon, National Secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, at one of the most important political trials in U.S. history. On the eve of World War II, 18 leaders of the SWP and Minneapolis Teamsters union were tried and found guilty of "conspiring to advocate the overthrow of the U.S. government." Washington's aim was to prevent the building of opposition to U.S. entry into the interimperialist carnage and block the charting of a class-struggle course for the labor movement.

In the excerpt below, Cannon explains the SWP's position on workers' defense

## BOOK OF THE WEEK

guards. *Socialism on Trial* is currently being reset by Pathfinder Press to make this communist classic more accessible and readable. The book is copyright © by Pathfinder, reprinted with permission.

Q [By defense attorney Albert Goldman]: Will you tell the court and jury the position of the Socialist Workers Party on workers' defense guards?

A [Cannon]: Well the party is in favor of the workers organizing defense guards whenever their organizations or their meetings are threatened by hoodlum violence. The workers should not permit their meetings to be broken up or their halls to be wrecked, or their work to be interfered with, by Ku Klux Klanners or Silver Shirts or fascists of any type, or hoodlums, or reactionary thugs, but should organize a guard and protect themselves where it is necessary.

Q: How long ago was the idea of a workers' defense guard first put forth by the group of which you are a member?

A: I may say that I have known about this idea, which we didn't invent at all, all my thirty years in the labor movement. I have known about the idea of workers' defense guards and seen them organized and helped to organize them more than once long before I ever heard of the Russian Revolution....

We formed a workers' defense guard in Minneapolis in January 1929, and the IWW [Industrial Workers of the World] gave us the use of their hall. They had a hall of their own somewhere down here on Washington Street. We advertised the meeting widely and announced that this meeting was going to be held under the protection of the workers' guard. And I personally know that there was such a guard, that they equipped themselves with hatchet handles, and stood along the side of the hall, and stood out in front and announced that nobody should interfere with this meeting. I spoke for about two hours there without any interference, under the protection of that workers' guard....

Q: Now, with reference to the workers' defense guard advocated by the Socialist Workers Party, what formal action did the party take at any time?

A: Well, in this later period of 1938 and '39, in some parts of the country we were confronted with an incipient fascist movement. Different organizations with different names began preaching Hitlerite doctrines in this country, and tried to practice Hitlerite methods of physical intimidation of workers' meetings, of Jews, Jewish stores, and suppressing free speech by violent methods.

In New York it became a rather acute problem. The various Bundists and associated groups in New York developed the practice of breaking up street meetings when either our party or some other workers' party would attempt to speak under a permit given by the city authorities. They had a habit of going around and molesting Jewish storekeepers, picketing them, and beating them, and challenging them to fight and so on.

There was an organization rampant at that time called the "Silver Shirts." I don't recall them in New York, but at various points in the West and Midwest.

Q: Do you recall the Christian Front?

A: Yes, in New York the Bundists and the Christian Front, and two or three other would-be fascist organizations, used to combine on this kind of business. At this time free speech was being very flagrantly denied in Jersey City under the authority of this man [Mayor Frank] Hague who announced that he was the law, got the habit of chasing people out of town and permitting meetings to be broken up ostensibly not by the authorities, but by the "outraged citizens" whom he and his gang had organized for that purpose. In general there were signs then — there was a lot of discontent and unrest in the country — there

were signs of a fascist movement growing up, and the question arose of how we could protect, not only ourselves, but how could the unions protect themselves. For example, in Jersey City picketing was denied by these means and the right to strike infringed upon — very serious questions of the invasion of civil liberties by unofficial bodies.

Basing ourselves on the experiences of the German and Italian fascist movements, which began with gangs of hoodlums and ended by destroying completely the labor unions and all workers' organizations and all civil rights — we came to the conclusion that the fascists should be met on their own ground, and that we should raise the slogan of workers' defense guards to protect workers' meetings, halls and institutions against hoodlum violence by the incipient fascists.

We discussed that with [a leader of the Russian Revolution Leon] Trotsky; his part in it was primarily an exposition of the development of the fascist movement in Europe. I don't recall now whether he originated the idea, but at any rate he heartily seconded it that our party should propose that the unions, wherever their peace was menaced by these hoodlums, should organize workers' defense guards and protect themselves.

Q: And did the unions follow the advice of the party?

A: I recall that we organized, in cooperation with some other radicals and some Jewish people — even some Jewish nationalists who didn't agree with our socialist program, but agreed on defending their human rights to live — we formed at that time a workers' defense guard in New York. To

protect not only the meetings of our party but of any organization menaced by these hoodlums. To protect citizens from molestation in the Bronx, where these hoodlums were intimidating and insulting Jewish people. This guard had several scuffles and fights with these gangs.

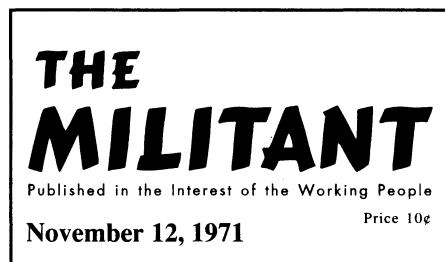
Then conditions in the country began to change. The economic situation in the country improved a bit. The question of the European war began to absorb attention, and take it away from these provincial American Hitlers. The fascist movement dropped into passivity and our workers' defense guard in New York didn't have anything to do and it just passed out of existence. In Los Angeles, if I recall correctly, there was a similar experience....

Q [By prosecutor Henry Schweinhaut]: ...Don't you want to build, while you are advancing toward power, a workers' militia? To help you get into power?

A: We use the expression "workers' defense guards" because that is most American and most easily and precisely defines what we want. The workers' defense guards will grow in size and strength insofar as the guards have a task to perform, not because we want them to grow.

If the fascists grow and fight the unions, the unions must inevitably counter that movement by developing their defense guards, and if the defense guards are overpowered by fascist gangsters and hoodlums and thugs, the only answer of the unions can be to strengthen the guards, and in the course of that struggle between the fascist gangs and the workers' defense guards, we hope the workers' defense guards will grow strong and eventually become a very effective power....

## — 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —



Sirimavo Bandaranaike's "United Front" government in Ceylon is apparently having difficulty maintaining "law and order" in its detention centers. The centers were set up to hold the nearly 16,000 youths arrested during the witch-hunt the regime launched last April....

According to the account by an unnamed Colombo correspondent, "The detainees attacked guards with improvised weapons. Furniture was smashed, tube lights and ceiling fans wrenched out, toilets reduced to a shambles, doors and windows shattered. The buildings of the Vidyodaya university now look like cattle sheds. The damage caused in the science department of this university alone is estimated at about Rs 1 million [1 rupee equals US\$.168]."

The correspondent also reported that pictures of Lenin, Marx, and Che Guevara adorn the walls of the campus-prison.

According to the Paris daily *Le Monde* of October 7, the Lanka Sama Samaja party, threatened disciplinary measures against lawyers who undertake to defend any person suspected of having supported the April "insurrection."



November 9, 1946

Faced with an AFL United Mine Workers ultimatum backed by a threat of a strike on Nov. 1, the Truman administration hastily backed down last week on its "get-tough-with-the-miners" attitude and agreed to begin discussions looking toward revision of its contract with the 400,000 soft coal miners.

On the eve of the conference, Capt. N.H. Collison, Coal Mines Administrator, announced a preliminary concession to the Miners.

The government has agreed, after previous refusal, to provide retroactive payments of vacation pay based on employment prior to the government's seizure of the mines on May 22.

Collison, who had previously said the government would "absolutely not" agree to reopen the contract, announced at the opening of the discussions that he had full authority to discuss all disputed issues, including wages, hours and working conditions.

The UMW committee promptly indicated the union is seeking important improvements in the contract by November 20, covering wage increases, reduced hours, and many other demands.

available from Pathfinder

### Socialism on Trial James P. Cannon

The basic ideas of socialism, explained in testimony during the frame-up trial of 18 leaders of the Minneapolis Teamsters union and the Socialist Workers Party charged with sedition during World War II. \$15.95



### What Is American Fascism?

James P. Cannon and Joseph Hansen

Workers' leaders assess Father Charles Coughlin's Social Justice movement and Mayor Frank Hague's dictatorial antilabor regime in Jersey City in the 1930s, and the anticommunist crusade led by Sen. Joseph McCarthy in the 1950s. \$8.00

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690. Fax: (212) 727-0150. When ordering by mail, please include \$3 to cover shipping and handling.

# U.S., French hands off Africa!

Recent articles in the U.S. big-business media have pointed to “genocide” in Central Africa and the plight of the hundreds of thousands of refugees who have been caught in the crossfire of an escalating conflict between the capitalist regimes in Rwanda, Zaire, and Burundi. The propaganda barrage begins to lay the groundwork for possible U.S. intervention in the region. It comes on the heels of a tour of the continent by U.S. secretary of state Warren Christopher proposing a so-called “Africa Crisis Response Force” of 10,000 soldiers, with the troops drawn from African armies and the primary funding from Washington.

As various pious commentators cry crocodile tears over the slaughter, not one whispers a suggestion to open the U.S. borders and allow the refugees to come here.

The U.S. rulers have absolutely no intention and are incapable of solving the conflict there or anywhere else in the world. They are concerned with maintaining stability in the region to allow them to advance their business interests, such as extracting raw material including crude oil, gemstones, metals, and cocoa.

Washington will more and more attempt to use its mili-

tary might to impose its domination at the expense of working people and its imperialist rivals around the world. As the capitalist world continues to decline, competition among the imperialists is intensifying. Paris, which still considers Western and Central Africa its “sphere of influence,” maintains a military presence in eight African countries, which it has not hesitated to use. Tensions between the two imperialist rivals are sharpening, as French government officials expressed their rulers’ displeasure with Washington’s moves to expand its influence on the African continent.

Thomas Sankara, who led a revolutionary government in the former French colony of Burkina Faso before he was assassinated in 1987, explained that the enemy of the African people is “imperialism that landed troops in certain countries.”

Imperialist intervention by the French or U.S. governments will only increase the carnage and deepen the impoverishment of the African toilers in the region. Working people should oppose any military moves there by Washington or Paris, and demand: U.S. and France get out of Africa!

# Fight assault on entitlements

The U.S. government’s reactionary assault on welfare, like the bipartisan drive against immigrant rights, is part of the ideological preparations to lay the groundwork for larger attacks on the hard-won entitlements of the working class. The big-business politicians scapegoat undocumented immigrants as “illegal” or rail against “welfare cheats” as a way to justify their reactionary policies.

The wealthy class seeks to create a pariah layer of unemployed workers who have been forced to rely on welfare benefits. They stigmatize them as the “underclass” in their ideological offensive — the “culture war” as ultrarightist Patrick Buchanan calls it — to deepen divisions among the working class and open the door to gut other entitlements.

The elimination of Aid for Families with Dependent Children, part of the Social Security Act of 1935, is the opening salvo in the wealthy class’s frontal assault on these entitlements.

Leading up to the November 5 election day, prominent bourgeois spokespieces, such as the editors of the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, began political preparations for the deeper attacks William Jefferson Clinton will have to lead in his second White House term — going directly after Social Security and Medicare.

It’s vital for working people to see the connections between the bosses’ war on labor and their assaults on welfare and other social entitlements — unemployment insurance, workers compensation, and health coverage such as Medicaid and Medicare. The employers’ attempt to gut the pension program of striking steelworkers at Wheeling-Pittsburgh is the other side of the ax they are using to chop welfare benefits.

The political conquests codified in the Social Security Act of 1935 were the beginning of an attempt to blunt the dog-eat-dog competition for jobs imposed on the working class under capitalism. It was an initial step by working people toward conquering the social organization of conditions necessary for life, such as education, housing,

and health care.

These are programs that provide some possibility for workers to make it through a lifetime, to have pensions, to be able to provide care for the young, to be able to get an education. They are not “handouts,” “giveaways,” or the “dole.” They are *universal social rights* — entitlements won by the working class, that are distributed out of what that class — and only that class — produces.

The rulers have designed the “welfare” system to humiliate and marginalize jobless workers forced to rely on it. “Workfare” at substandard wages and other measures in the new welfare law will only make this aspect of it worse. The historic drive of the labor movement was always to fight for the extension of Social Security and other non-means tested measures that are entitlements for all. The labor movement today needs to lead the way in fighting for jobs for all, unemployment compensation at union-scale pay for as long as a worker is jobless, and other such measures.

This is the only way for the working class to defend itself from what lies ahead under capitalism — more homeless children, starvation for millions, and scapegoating of the victims of the capitalist economic crisis. The rulers are moving to curtail our democratic rights and will attempt to terrorize working people into submission. But they will face resistance to their efforts to impose these anti-working-class policies.

That’s why labor battles, like those by striking workers at General Motors and the 1.6 million public workers in France who waged a one-day strike against their government’s austerity drive, must be linked to the worldwide struggles of working people for jobs and relief from the ravages of the capitalist economic crisis. International working-class leadership can be forged from these fights that can lead a revolutionary struggle to overthrow this rotten system and build workers and farmer governments that will begin to create a new society without racism, exploitation, and the other degrading conditions intrinsic to capitalism.

# Capitalist injustice system

Courts in the United States are instruments of capitalist rule that defend, above all, the interests of the ruling class. Two recent trials in New York highlight this.

Francis Livoti, a New York cop, choked Anthony Báez, a 29-year-old Latino, to death last December. His crime? Accidentally hitting a cop car with a football during a game of toss. There were eyewitnesses and medical evidence that Livoti put a chokehold on Báez. A crowd of observers, convinced the cop was guilty, sat in the courtroom for the entire proceedings. Nevertheless, state supreme court judge Gerald Sheindlin, who himself admitted the cop carried out an illegal, lethal procedure, declared Livoti not guilty October 7, claiming that evidence left a doubt as to whether Livoti *intended* to kill Báez.

Barely two weeks later on October 22, another New York court convicted a homeless man of murder in the tragic death of a firefighter. Edwin Smith, who was trying to keep warm in an abandoned building, accidentally set off a fire. Firefighter John Clancy died trying to put

out the flames. A jury convicted Smith of murder. The court argued that he did drugs, is homeless, and is “reckless” — therefore he is also a killer. Smith was also convicted of arson, which *Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary* describes as “the willful or malicious burning of property, especially with a criminal or fraudulent intent.” It was the capitalist system, which is incapable of providing housing and generates hundreds of thousands of homeless workers in New York alone, that killed Clancy, not a homeless man trying to keep from freezing to death.

There is no contradiction between these rulings. The cops, courts, and prisons are an integrated system designed to protect and serve the interests of the propertied class.

Workers and cops do not get equal presumption of innocence in the bourgeois courts. Under capitalism, workers are presumed guilty, guilty, guilty and cops are presumed innocent. That’s why Francis Livoti, who acted as the judge, jury, and executioner of Anthony Báez, walked free, while Edwin Smith is facing 15 years to life in prison.

# Affirmative action fight

Continued from Page 12

1998 class, when admissions without affirmative action begin. Asian-American students comprised 41 percent of the 1995 Berkeley freshman class. Community colleges and state universities will also be affected by Proposition 209, as will some public high school desegregation and remedial programs.

## Protests against Proposition 209

There have been numerous small protest actions in defense of affirmative action, the most important being last summer’s march from Sacramento to San Diego led by Chicano youth who held rallies and distributed leaflets along the way. “La Marcha,” as the weeks-long protest was called, culminated in actions outside the Republican Party national convention.

A series of anti-209 events featuring prominent Democrat Jesse Jackson, National Organization for Women leader Eleanor Smeal, and United Farmworker official Dolores Huerta promoted election of Democrats as the way to defend affirmative action. AFL-CIO officials have endorsed local affirmative action groups and put their names on leaflets sent out to union members. But their main focus has been campaigning for Clinton’s reelection, not defending affirmative action.

Much of the literature put out by organizations campaigning against Proposition 209 argues that supporting affirmative action does not mean quotas should be used to enforce it. “Affirmative action,” states a leaflet from the South Bay Labor Council’s Committee on Political Education, “allows public agencies and schools to use loose goals and timetables to bring a sense of fairness into the workplace and address racial and gender disparities.”

“Affirmative action does not permit quotas — quotas are illegal,” states a brochure from the East Bay Californians for Affirmative Action. It “does not require the selection of unqualified individuals.”

Much of the anti-209 material focuses on who supports the measure, including ex-Klansman David Duke; UC Regent Ward Connerly, a millionaire businessman who is Black; and California governor Peter Wilson, whose failed presidential campaign was based on opposition to affirmative action and immigrants’ rights.

Working people should fight to defend affirmative action with quotas, argued Socialist Workers candidate Musa. He noted that affirmative action quotas were conquests of the massive civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s. These battles demolished the racist Jim Crow system of legally enforced segregation in employment, education, and housing in the south. In the late 1960s and 1970s new forces among women and Chicanos joined the challenge to discrimination and inequality.

“Racist and sexist discrimination drives down the wages of all workers, and enables the rulers to sow divisions within the working class that makes united struggles more difficult,” Musa continued. “Forcing employers, school admissions officers, the government, and others to accept at least minimum quotas of oppressed nationalities and women applicants — taking ‘affirmative action’ on their behalf — was an important gain that strengthened the entire working class. Racist practices and attitudes among white working people began to break down; the ability of the bosses to hold down the value of labor power of oppressed nationalities and women diminished. For this reason, the employers and their two-party political system began to attack affirmative action quotas, along with other measures such as busing for school desegregation, bilingual education, and abortion rights, as soon as they were won.

“The fate of these gains will not be decided by the November 5 vote,” Musa stated. “These conquests cannot simply be erased by a ballot proposition. The entire labor movement has a stake in fighting to defend and extend affirmative action.”



# Copper workers in Utah hold two-day strike

BY JESSE SMITH

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah — For the first time in 16 years, the unions struck Kennecott Utah Copper October 16, after two weeks of working day-to-day under an expired contract. The strike only lasted 48 hours, but succeeded in raising the workers' confidence and jarring the company into making an improved offer October 21.

Union members approved a six-year contract October 24, by a vote of 704 to 538. The company won a concession on health insurance imposing a deductible that would rise to \$700 per family per year by 2000.

Workers see the six-year agreement as a setback, since past contracts were generally for three years. The final proposal, negotiated after the strike, contained six-year raises ranging from \$2.01 to \$3.32, with the same percentage for all job classes. This will increase the gap between the lowest and highest wage.

The strike mobilized more than 1,700 union members who walked out on short notice at 3:00 p.m., before the normal end of the shift at Kennecott. The walkout took place at 10 p.m. at the smelter to allow for an orderly shutdown requested by the company.

Management used this time to bring salaried personnel in to learn how to run operations while the workers were still there.

Picket lines were abruptly pulled down the second night and the TV news announced a return to work starting with the next day's afternoon shift.

Kennecott is organized by locals of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA), as well as locals of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, the International Association of Machinists, the Oper-

ating Engineers, the United Transportation Union, and the Office and Professional Employees International Union.

Contracts had expired September 30, after months of negotiations with little result. Following a two-week break, talks had resumed October 15.

The workers had passed strike authorization votes, but it was the joint union bargaining committee that called the strike and then called it off.

The bargaining committee, after polling the union members, had made wages, pensions, and insurance the main issues. A large portion of the workers are close to retirement age. Many already have more than 30 years of service but can't afford to retire on Kennecott's meager pension.

During the 16 years without a strike, the unions were weakened and workers lost ground at Kennecott. They were laid off for up to two years during the mid-80s slump in copper prices, and severe concessions were extorted when they came back. Wages have never recovered, and such key gains as sick pay and cost-of-living raises were lost.

In my local the standard refrain of union officers, repeated by many workers, was "You can't strike any more. They'll just replace you. We'd lose everything." Many workers are deep in debt and felt somewhat nervous as word of the strike spread. But when the time came, all the workers — including some who had never officially joined the union — walked out.

No more than a handful crossed picket lines in the entire operation. Hundreds of workers flocked to union meetings each afternoon and staffed the picket lines around the clock at all gates.

On those lines, morale was higher than it



Militant/Lisa Hickler

Workers picket at Kennecott during 1993 contract fight over jobs and safety

had been in the plant. Workers from the different unions picketed together. They turned away Teamster-organized drivers and unionized contractors, and waved back at the stream of passing cars that honked their horns. A union officer representing bakery workers brought us donuts.

Kennecott attempted to run parts of its operation with foremen and other salaried employees. They brought in private security squads and announced plans to bus in strikebreakers.

When strikers first returned to work, the company attempted to force some of them to work alongside bosses and show them

how to do their jobs. Provisions of the expired local contracts that governed work rules were torn up by the company. In Kennecott's rush to restart production, there was a poison gas exposure at the refinery that sent several workers to the hospital.

Workers have voiced frustration because they weren't calling the shots, and the secrecy of negotiations left union members in the dark. The unionists are stronger, however, for breaking the myth that "you can't go on strike any more."

Jesse Smith is a member of USWA Local 392 at Kennecott in Salt Lake County.

## — LETTERS —

### More on Afghanistan

I want to thank Megan Arney for her excellent informative article on Afghanistan in last week's issue of the *Militant*. I was a Peace Corps volunteer in Afghanistan from 1967-1969, and read with horror the latest news from Afghanistan. I would like to add a few other things.

First, the country of Afghanistan was an artificial construct set up by the victors of World War I. If you look at a map prior to World War I, you will not see Afghanistan. It was created after World War I as a buffer between the British and French and to stop the spread of communism from the Central Asian Soviet Republics into Persia (now Iran) and India.

The way the borders of the country were drawn make sense only to capitalists. The people who live in northern Afghanistan, which borders on the Central Asian republics, are culturally and linguistically like the people of those republics.

The people of Herat, which is a large city on the western border, were the same brand of Shia Muslims as the Muslims of Iran. Another large ethnic group in the southern part of the country is Pushto.

The Pushtuns had high hopes after India gained its independence and the state of Pakistan was created that they too would get their own country.

The Pushtuns, like the Kurds, stretch across three different countries. They stretch across Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the oil rich southern part of Iran. In the late '40s and '50s, they struggled for their own state of Pushtunistan and were brutally suppressed by the Pakistani government.

The main value of Afghanistan for the United States has always been strategic. During the Cold War in the '50s, Afghanistan got four paved roads which circle the country.

The U.S. built one road from Herat to Kandahar and an airport in Kandahar which could have been used to attack the U.S.S.R. The U.S.S.R. built a road from Kabul to Kunduz near the border with the

U.S.S.R., etc.

Afghanistan has no natural resources. The Russians explored for natural gas but found none. The war in Afghanistan has gone on for years why is the U.S. ready to recognize a brutal reactionary regime like the Taliban. According to Ms. Arney's article, it is Afghanistan's strategic value to a U.S. oil company which wants to build a pipeline through it.

I have sent copies of the article to Peace Corps volunteers I still have contact with. It is also inspiring me to pick up a copy of *To See the Dawn* published by Pathfinder Press the next time I visit the Pathfinder Bookstore in San Francisco. Lenore Sheridan  
San Jose, California

### Songs for Leonard Peltier

Readers of the *Militant* will be pleased to know about the release of a 17-song CD called *Pine Ridge: An Open Letter to Allan Rock — Songs for Leonard Peltier*.

Allan Rock is the Canadian Minister of Justice. Leonard Peltier was framed up for the murder of two FBI agents at Pine Ridge, South Dakota in 1975. He is still in prison at Leavenworth, Kansas over twenty years later.

The CD features well-known Canadian musicians and writer Michael Ondaatje. It has two aims. First to raise the public profile and funding for Peltier's case. Second to pressure Rock to protest the use of false affidavits that were used to extradite Leonard from Canada to stand trial in the U.S. in 1976.

The driving force behind the project is Greg Keelor from the

band Blue Rodeo. "The case has been on [Rock's] agenda for about two years now and he said he is going to deal with it," he told the *Vancouver Sun*. "One reason we did the record is to get the issue a little higher on the agenda."

The liner notes accompanying the CD include the text of an open letter from Frank Dreaver, coordinator of the Leonard Peltier Defense Committee, to Rock detailing the complicity of the Canadian government authorities in Peltier's frame-up. Artists on the CD include Jim Cuddy, also of Blue Rodeo; Sarah McLachlan; Jane Sibbery; and fiddler Ashley MacIsaac. Keelor contributes the title song, a country ballad of Peltier's story that runs almost ten minutes.

Monica Jones  
Vancouver, British Columbia

### Thanks for the 'Militant'

I just came across the *Militant* last month in Montreal and was so impressed with the two issues I read that I want to continue reading it.

I just happened across the Pathfinder bookstore while in Montreal, and later had the pleasure of meeting some of the Young Socialists group.

E.M.  
Austin, Texas

### Thank you from a Chicano

Thank you for all your coverage on the march from Sacramento to San Diego. From a Marchista and a Chicano! Forward forever, backwards never.

R.M.  
San Diego, California

### CIA and drugs

The discussion in the *Militant* concerning the CIA and drugs in Los Angeles reminded me of a very important book by Alfred McCoy titled, "The Politics of Heroin in Southeast Asia" (This was reviewed a long time ago in the *Militant*.) Actually the book is a much broader history of drug use in the U.S. Its main point is that the origins of the drug trade are in the social force that imperialism depends on to oppress its colonies and otherwise defend its interests against the working class throughout the world. It explains how there was almost no drug use in the US immediately following WWII as a result of the disruption

of shipping during the war. But drugs began to flow again as the "French connection" was reestablished when the OSS formed an alliance with the Mafia in order to have a support network for the U.S. invasion of Italy (Lucky Luciano was even released from prison to function as a liaison for the invasion force, anything rather than depend on and arm the resistance movement of armed workers and peasants) and then worked with the mob to organize a physical defeat of the powerful dockworkers union in Marseilles. The book explains also, the reasons why the U.S. wouldn't help stop the growth of poppy flowers in Turkey that are the raw material for this traffic.

It also goes into great detail in the social base of the U.S. — backed dictatorships in southeast Asia, which depended a great deal on drug trafficking out of the golden triangle area. How these forces were used against the Chinese revolution and then the Vietnamese revolution — and abetted by the U.S. war machine there.

McCoy's history helps argue for a strong case against any conspiracy theory on the rise of the drug trade and its connections to the CIA. In addition to being a function of the capitalist market system, the drug trade also has its origins in the needs of U.S. foreign policy and the social forces it relies on to maintain imperialist domination.

Pete Seidman  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

## Strikes make 'hot fall' in Germany

BY CARL-ERIK ISACSSON

STOCKHOLM — "The hot fall has begun," read the headline in *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. In the largest actions since a wave of protests swept the country this spring, more than 400,000 metalworkers walked out of factories and steel mills throughout western and eastern Germany October 24 to protest proposed cuts in sick pay and other social entitlements.

In North Rhine-Westphalia, a major industrial center, 187,000 workers at 750 companies waged a one-day strike. At the Duisburg and Dortmund steel mills in Bochum, production was shut down except for the blast furnaces. In Baden-Württemberg, where many auto plants are located, 120,000 workers walked off the job for several hours.

Some 60,000 workers at Mercedes Benz participated in the protests in factories all over the country. Ursula Engen, vice chairman of the German union federation DGB, was quoted by the Swedish daily *Svenska Dagbladet* at a mass meeting saying, "We will not give up the rights we have fought for without a fight."

When some of the biggest industrial companies in Germany decided to immediately apply the new law, lowering sick pay from 100 percent of wages to 80 percent, a week



3,000 Daimler-Benz workers in Stuttgart protest October 1 against cuts in sick pay

of protests erupted culminating in strikes and demonstrations of more than 100,000 metalworkers October 1.

The employers had to back off from their attack and enter into negotiations with the union. Negotiations between IG Metall, Germany's largest union, and the metal employers broke down October 23. Protests

the next day were timely. October 24 has a symbolic value in the union movement in Germany. It was that day 40 years ago that IG Metall began a strike that lasted for 114 days and eventually won the right to full sick-leave payments.

The London *Financial Times* reported that workers from the Hamburg shipyard,

Blohm + Voss carried placards "To preserve the inheritance of our fathers." The placard refers to the 1956 strike of 34,000 steelworkers in Schleswig-Holstein. A worker at the shipyard in Hamburg was quoted defending the 100 percent sick pay saying the issue is one "over which we don't even talk."

IG Metall and the metal employers are now to enter negotiations on a regional level. IG Metall, which has gained strength and won 10,000 new members in October, is expected to cancel contracts that expire at the end of the year. The employers condemned the strikes as illegal and self-defeating, claiming that German industrial competitiveness will suffer.

The bosses want to lower vacation and Christmas pay. This spring the public employees union went on strike when the government demanded similar concessions. Labor minister Norbert Blum on October 25 threatened that the government would have to intervene if the strikes continue, thus doing away with collective bargaining. Other unions like IG-Chemie are also in negotiations over sick pay — with similar prospects for labor protests as in the metal industry.

Carl-Erik Isacsson is a member of the Metalworkers Union at the Scania truck plant in Södertälje, Sweden.

## S. African Truth Commission exposes apartheid rulers

BY GREG ROSENBERG

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Johan van der Merwe, former commissioner of the apartheid police force, publicly implicated former South African president Pieter W. Botha and other Cabinet officials in two of the most high-profile acts of terror committed by the white regime in the 1980s. Van der Merwe's October 21 testimony before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission marked another crack in the wall of silence put up by leaders and functionaries of the former apartheid regime.

Van der Merwe told the commission that he had ordered the 1988 bombing of Khotso House in downtown Johannesburg, which housed the South African Council of Churches. He also said he had devised a plan to distribute booby-trapped hand grenades to student anti-apartheid fighters in 1985. Eight youth were killed.

Then-Law and Order minister Adriaan Vlok told van der Merwe that Botha himself ordered the church headquarters destroyed. Vlok, said van der Merwe, had instructed that Khotso House was to be damaged by explosives "to such an extent that it could no longer be utilized."

On October 30, a judge sentenced Eugene de Kock, former commander of the notorious Vlakplaas police murder squad, to two life terms plus additional jail sentences totaling more than 200 years. He was convicted on 89 charges, including 6 for murder. It was the revelations presented by de Kock that ultimately led to van der Merwe's confession. Catherine Mlangeni, the mother of Bheki Mlangeni, remarked at the sentencing that "I feel a bit better...I know he will stay in jail forever." De Kock had assassinated Mlangeni, an anti-apartheid lawyer, with a set of earphones packed with explosives.

The Truth Commission was established by the African National Congress-led government to bring to light the wanton murder and brutality organized by the apartheid state. Anti-apartheid fighters who carried out sabotage and other attacks against the regime are also to testify. Offering the possibility of amnesty to those who confess their crimes, the commission is vested with subpoena powers. Public hearings conducted by the commission often assume the character of mass meetings, with hundreds or thousands of working people cramming into rooms to cheer on the testimony of the regime's victims and demanding that the truth be told.

Continuing mass pressure, along with

criminal trials and issuing of subpoenas, is taking its toll on some former cops and police generals. A growing number are starting to spill the beans and in the process implicating central leaders of the former National Party government. Apartheid military figures, however, continue to cover up their entire history.

### Cop testifies 'kicking and squealing'

The former chief cop's testimony was not exactly voluntary. Van der Merwe received word that 5 of his subordinates planned to implicate him in some of the 40 murders they were planning to confess to the Truth Commission. Van der Merwe applied for amnesty in relation to these two acts, but said he would reserve judgment on any further admissions depending on what came out in public.

"Van der Merwe and the other police witnesses have been forced kicking and squealing to the commission by the threat of prosecution, and there is good chance that their testimony will spark a chain reaction which will envelop a widening circle of policemen and state officials," said an editorial in the October 23 *Johannesburg Business Day*. The financial daily noted that the testimony marked "a serious problem for the NP (National Party), which has accepted executive responsibility only for pre-emptive and 'hot pursuit' attacks in neighbouring states and continues to insist that the domestic crimes...were those of maverick agents who exceeded their brief."

The testimony of their former chief cop indeed brought protest from the National Party. "An aspect that is cause for increasing concern is the one-sided emphasis being placed by concentrating only on the deeds of the previous government and no attention being given to the deeds of the ANC during this period," said NP chief spokesperson Fanus Schoeman.

Botha and current NP leader Frederik W. de Klerk, meanwhile, have remained totally silent on the revelations.

Truth Commission vice-chairperson Alex Boraine said the body would try to get Botha to testify, but that "if there is no positive response we have the powers of subpoena and will use them."

"Gen. van der Merwe's testimony...vindicates the ANC's view that covert operations against anti-apartheid activists was not the work of maverick elements within the ranks of former security forces but were sanctioned at the highest echelons of the apartheid state," said a state-

ment from the ANC Department of Information and Publicity.

### 'Permanently neutralized'

The 5 cops and police officials who later named van der Merwe as the source of their orders were implicated during the criminal trial of de Kock. Three already face a variety of criminal charges, but their trials have been postponed to 1997. In the statement opening their amnesty plea, the cops derided an earlier whitewash of apartheid rule presented by de Klerk to the commission. "We seriously doubt the statement made by Mr. F.W. de Klerk," they said.

The cops are implicated, among other things, in the murder of 3 Port Elizabeth anti-apartheid fighters known as the Pebco Three, and 2 groups of young fighters from Mamelodi township outside Pretoria, who were lured to their deaths on promises that

they were being taken out of the country for ANC military training.

Brig. Jack Cronje, who presented much of the testimony for the 5 cops, explained that "it was necessary to eliminate [ANC and other] terrorists and activists because if they were not eliminated they would not be permanently neutralized. The legal system was not equipped to deal with these situations. It was of a proactive nature."

In related news, Truth Commission chairman Desmond Tutu has asked the government to extend the amnesty cut-off date from December 1993 to May 10, 1994 when South African president Nelson Mandela was inaugurated. The date set means no one can apply for amnesty for acts committed after that time. Mandela said he opposed any such move.

Of the 2,000 amnesty applications pending, so far only three have been granted.

## Thousands protest Sweden austerity

BY BIRGITTA ISACSSON

STOCKHOLM — Slowly but surely working people are coming out in the streets to protest the austerity measures implemented by the Social Democratic government here in Sweden. On October 16 Prime Minister Göran Persson spoke at a public meeting in Skellefteå, a small town in the north of Sweden, when more than 1,000 people showed up to protest the government's policy. They interrupted him and booed.

Persson had promised to cut unemployment in half by the year 2000. Instead unemployment is again on the rise, reaching more than half a million people, officially 7.7 percent. The government's austerity policy is increasing unemployment, while at the same time attacking the rights of the unemployed.

New restrictions make it harder to qualify for unemployment benefits. Currently workers need to work 5 months in the last 12-month period to qualify. Starting Jan. 1, 1997, a proposed requirement would be raised to 9 months, along with an added rule of working at least 80 hours per month.

On October 17, some 3,000 people marched in Stockholm to demand their rights. Many who came were jobless workers from outside Stockholm. The march was initiated by the Transport Union in Gävle, a town north of Stockholm. Some other local unions were also among the organizers but

LO, the national union federation, did not support the demonstration.

Labor Minister Margareta Winberg was met in Gothenburg by more than 2,000 protesters — most of them unionists — while debating a member of the conservative Moderate Party October 23. These have been the biggest protests since the Social Democratic Party won the 1994 elections.

Another proposed restriction, which would go into effect after Jan. 1, 1997, affects workers over 55 years old who will lose 150 days of their unemployment benefits. Now they have the right to 450 days. Some 30,000 people each year will lose their unemployment benefits and end up on welfare. In 1995, 11 billion Swedish krona (1krona = US\$0.15) were paid in welfare — 100 percent more than in the 1990.

In spring 1995 the Social Democrats, in alliance with the Center Party, lowered unemployment benefits from 80 percent to 75 percent. Before Göran Persson was elected as chairman of the Social Democratic Party and prime minister of the government he promised to raise unemployment benefits to 80 percent sometime in the late 1990s. The unions are still demanding that unemployment benefits be raised to 90 percent.

On November 9 a demonstration is planned in Luleå, a region where unemployment is the highest in the country and where labor struggles historically have had a stronghold.